

# IACM NEWSLETTER

**OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION OF  
CUSTOMS MUSEUMS**



**2008**

[www.customsmuseums.org](http://www.customsmuseums.org)



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# EDITORIAL

## BY THE IACM PRESIDENT

It seemed fitting that Hamburg should be the venue for my final IACM Conference and General Assembly, as President. It was from this lovely city that so many bade farewell to Europe as they commenced their journeys to a new world. They took with them, not only fond memories of beloved faces and places, but experience and survival skills that would see most of them adapt to their new surroundings. Likewise, I take with me to retirement fond memories of so many friends in IACM in which I had felt at home from my first meeting in Liverpool in 1997. Words cannot express my gratitude for all the help and wealth of advice that we received from IACM members when we were planning the Revenue Museum in Dublin.

I am very proud to have been President of IACM for two terms. I am equally proud of what we achieved over that six years. While we would all like to have instant change and better international recognition for IACM, it is only by small, but constant, steps that organisations, like ours, can develop. We have just the one meeting each year, with the occasional meetings of Working Parties. But we have come a long way and I was delighted that one of my final Presidential functions was to welcome Azerbaijan and Malta as members of IACM, thereby bringing our total membership to twenty countries.

The theme of our annual Conference in Hamburg was 'New Museums and Developments'. It was marvellous to see how much is being done in so many of our museums to make them more attractive to the public. The presentations from our German hosts, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France and Ireland illustrated not only the vibrancy and commitment of those working in the museums, but the recognition by our various Administrations that the benefits can be enormous. Indeed, the vast numbers visiting so many of our museums tell their own story. During the first three months in operation, the Revenue Museum in Dublin had over ten thousand visitors. My sincere hope is that, during the present global economic crisis, our museums will continue to flourish. Many of us have seen recessions come and go. The secret is to continue on and matters will improve. They always do.

I have been very privileged to hold the prestigious role of President and I am glad to have made some contribution to the development of IACM. However, none of that would have been



Photograph: Jean-Pierre Reuter

**PADDY RYAN,**  
**PRESIDENT OF IACM**

possible without the support of the member countries. It would be unfair to list the names but, apart from the Officers of IACM, I offer a special thanks to Geert Nieman and wish him a long and healthy retirement.

Finally, I offer my sincere gratitude to our German hosts who made such an effort to ensure that we all had a memorable conference. I wish them every success with their revamped Customs Museum. In particular, I thank Susanne Mehrkühler and Christian Schaade who worked so hard to ensure a successful conference. They succeeded with diamonds and we are grateful. I wish our new President, Henri Nimax, every good wish for his term of office. I also extend sincere good wishes to our new Treasurer, Frans Fox. Above all, I thank Jon Agust. Eggertsson, who has been re-elected as Secretary, for all his support to me. I hope he still keeps sending me the jokes. Laughter is by far the best tonic in more difficult times.

**Paddy Ryan,**  
**President of IACM**

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## COVER

View into the Exhibition of the German Customs Museum.  
(Photograph: German Customs Museum)

## IMPRINT

The IACM Newsletter is published once a year. It is the official Newsletter of the International Association of Customs Museums. This Newsletter is published by the German Customs Museum (Hamburg).

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# OPENING ADDRESS

LET'S GO ON WITH HISTORY IN THE FUTURE!



CHRISTIAN SCHAADÉ,  
HEAD OF THE GERMAN  
CUSTOMS MUSEUM

Photograph: German Customs Museum

Dear Customs friends and colleagues,

thinking back to the 16th Conference and General Assembly of the International Association of Customs Museums in September 2008 in Hamburg, I'm still happy about the friendly and very cooperative atmosphere the meeting took place. Once again I want to thank the IACM-members for the excellent presentations illustrating their work on new design and giving valuable food for thought.

In our quickly changing world the motto of the conference "New Design" couldn't have been chosen better to focus the common efforts of Customs museums to make customs history vivid.

I'm convinced, we all did a good job not only during the conference but also on this newsletter, demonstrating many interesting aspects of how to present customs history in an inventive way.

Thanks to everybody, who contributed to this newsletter and now let's go on with history in the future!

**Christian Schaade**



# NEW PRESIDENT

## HENRI NIMAX – THE THIRD PRESIDENT OF IACM

PHOTOGRAPH: JEAN-PIERRE REUTER

I am Henri Nimax, President of IACM and Deputy – Head of the Research Division at the headquarters of Luxembourg Customs. It is a great honour for me and my country to become the third President of IACM. I have been involved with IACM since attending my first conference with my colleague, Jean Pierre Reuter, in Liverpool in 1997.

At the time, I was a member of the Luxembourg Customs Museum Association and actively involved in trying to establish a Museum in our country. This was done prior to hosting the IACM Conference in Luxembourg in 2003. We found the contacts made and established through IACM were very valuable to us in setting up our own museum.

I hope that, during my term as President, IACM will further enlarge with new members. I also hope to consolidate the contact between members, especially now during the economic downturn. I will endeavour to promote IACM as a well established identity with much knowledge and experience of presenting and displaying our rich heritage of Customs, Excise and taxation experience, along with proudly displaying our work of the present time. I would like all members to know that should problems arise that my fellow officers of the Association and myself are there to listen and hopefully to be in a position to help.

I hope that we will be able to hold a conference each year where every member can proudly tell of the achievements of his/her museum. I have no doubt that IACM will help me a little in my daily work and that my Administration will support me in my role as President.

I live in a little village 15 km from Luxembourg City with my wife and two teenage daughters. I speak fluent French, English, German and, of course, Luxembourgish. I like to read especially military history and I collect and build model-trains. For vacations, I like the mountains, mainly in Austria, but also in Switzerland and I'm a great fan of Scotland. As many of you know, I play a trumpet in the Luxembourg Customs music band. I look forward to acting as President of this great organisation.

**Henri Nimax,  
President of IACM**

HENRI NIMAX, PRESIDENT OF IACM AND DEPUTY – HEAD  
OF THE RESEARCH DIVISION AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF  
LUXEMBOURG CUSTOMS

# AUSTRIA

## A MUSEUM MEMORIAL OF THE CUSTOMS GUARD IN THE POLICE SCHOOL

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPH: FERDINAND G. HAMPL



MUSEUM MEMORIAL OF THE AUSTRIAN CUSTOMS GUARD

### Introduction for common comprehension

Due to a political decision, the Austrian customs guard was abolished in the year 2004 after 174 years of existing. For most of the people, this decision of the Austrian government under chancellor Schüssel was completely incomprehensible. From the 1300 officers of the customs guard, one half was transferred to the police (ministry of home affairs), the other half stayed as civil officers at the ministry of finance.

Due to a great idea from Brigadier Rupert Fehring, head of the SIAC-academy in Troiskirchen / North – Austria, a small museum memorial of the Austrian customs guard could be installed in the modern building of the police school. The main idea of Brigadier Fehring was that all the guards, building the actual “Police” corps shouldn’t be forgotten.

As curator of the customs museum in Vienna, I did the job, together with my wife and son (also a former member of the customs guard) and the help of retired FOinspector Wilhelm Hufnagel from the academy in Troiskirchen. The building-up of the “museum” could only

be done with the assistance of the Supporterclub SIAC-academy.

The project was greatly supported by the union of the Austrian customs guards with a donation of 2,500 € and a big donation by the Austrian National Bank. This donation of 2,000 € was only possible by the recommendation of Dr. Manfred Frey, Vice-president of the Austrian National Bank and former president of the financial direction for Vienna, Lower-Austria and Burgenland. By this action, he showed once again that his heart is still beating for the customs guard.

Many thanks to all these people and the union of the Austrian customs guard who made it possible that at a place where a hundred police officers are instructed every year, the history of 174 years of Austrian customs guard is well remembered.

*SIAC = Safety/Security academy (of the ministry of home affairs)*

# AZERBAIJAN

## THE AZERBAIJAN MUSEUM AT THE CROSS OF THE CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF EURASIA

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS: THE MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF CUSTOMS OF AZERBAIJAN

On January 27, 2007, on the eve of the 15th anniversary of the State Committee of Customs (SCC) the large work on forming the Museum of the History of Customs of Azerbaijan in Baku city, the capital of Azerbaijan was finished. The main part of the exposition consists of the cultural and historical valuable confiscated by the SCC staff.

Among 400 items represented in the exposition are the jewelry and carpets (19th -20th cc.), the coins of Ancient Rome, Byzantine, and Sefevides Empire, the Koran manuscripts, the icons of the 19th -20th cc., and the Afghan and Indian daggers and swords.

Over the period of 1997 - 2008 about 800 objects – the works of art, science and religion of the 19th -20th centuries – were handed over to the Carpet Museum, the Shirvanshahs Palace complex, some institutes of the National Academy of Sciences as well as to the Department of the Caucasus Muslims, to the Orthodox and Catholic Churches and to the Jewish religious community as well.

The Museum of the History of Customs systematically organizes exhibitions. Among them are “The Role of the World Customs against the drugs” (Baku, 2006 – competition and

exhibition of the posters), “History of the Azerbaijan Customs reflected in Fine Arts” (Baku, 2007). The last one along with the exhibition “The Azerbaijan Customs at the Guard of Historical Values” were held in Brussels (February 13-15, 2008), Tour & Taxes Hall, and in Geneva (September 8-23, 2008), the Geneva UN Headquarters.

The important direction of the Museum activity is being published. The luxury catalogues – “The Azerbaijan Customs at the Guard of Cultural Heritage”, “The History of the Azerbaijan Customs reflected in Fine Arts” and “The Azerbaijan Customs: historical traditions and the present” were published in 2007 along with DVDs – the documentary on activity of the Azerbaijan Customs on guarding of the cultural heritage. In June 2007 the Museum of the History of Customs became a member of the International Cooperation of the Museums (ICOM), and since September 2008 it has been a member of the International Association of the Customs Museums (IACM).

So, the main achievements of the Museum of the History of Customs are still in further...



THE MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF CUSTOMS OF AZERBAIJAN



# BELGIUM

## NEW DESIGN: A CONSENSUS OF DIFFERENT STORIES

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS: MICHAËL VAN GIEL AND ANN VAN PUYMBROECK

### A different story

The assignment to write an article about the new design of our museum is rather difficult. It is only since a few weeks we definitely know where our new museum will be located on 1 January 2010. However... As soon as we were sure about the location, Michaël Van Giel and I decided to take some pictures. Although we both thought the image of the balloons was quite attractive, the pictures proved to be different. It seems that each one of us already has another story to tell.

### A realistic picture

Ann: My photograph is a realistic picture on the past, the present and the future. The rests of the building remind us of the old bounded warehouse of the Belgian Railway Company, opened on 13 October 1843. For several years all kind of packages sent by train were kept here, sometimes under the surveillance of Customs officers. Behind the remainders of this front, you can see a bulldozer. The board of the city wanted the old building to be removed, because of several new plans that now must be realised such as: an academy, two administrative buildings and a nice park. In the background of this picture you can see the innumerable balloons representing the people who will work or relax here in the near future.

### An impressionistic view

Michaël: I wanted my picture to be an impressionistic view. I got myself focused on the balloons, because for me they

represent the future. They symbolic the people who will spend the next years of their life here on this site: as a student or a teacher of the new Antwerp Academy, as a boy and girl spending the most exciting period of their life in the new park area, but also as the visitor looking forward to our new designed museum. It seems that all the T-shirts and balloons are looking alike, but that is an optical illusion. Every T-shirt balloon represents a unique person with his own dreams and expectations but all together they are one group looking forward to what the future will bring. Will these people be successful or not? Are they practical individuals or do they have a creative mind? What will they do with this "very spot" in a large city such as Antwerp?"One person is watching this "spot" in anonymity, the homeless hidden under the bridge, a blanket on his body. What are his or her expectations of this "new design"? Will his or her dreams come through?

### Consensus

The members of the Belgian D&A museum, already know that a small part of this spot will be used to create a new museum on Customs and Excise. The design team will be a combination of retired people, customs officers at work and students of the art school, who will bring the best of their experience, creativity and practical knowhow together to achieve a consensus: telling the story of Customs officers in the past, the present and the future in a way that all visitors, in all their diversity, think of it as a success!

A REALISTIC PICTURE ON THE PAST,  
THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE



IN THE BACKGROUND ON THE RIGHT: THE HOMELESS  
HIDDEN UNDER THE BRIDGE



# DENMARK

## NEW DESIGN



TEXT: TORA RIBERS / PHOTOGRAPHS: TOLDSKAT MUSEUM

The newest exhibition at the ToldSkat Museum is focussing on a subject of general interest of the Danish tax-paying population: Income tax and income tax forms. The title of the exhibition is "The tax of you and me". To do an exhibition on tax is not a very easy task – most of the objects are papers, laws and statistics. We have chosen to show some of the papers, and we have tried to tell the story about the technological development in relation to the income tax forms. Every tax payer in Denmark has a "tax folder" on the authority's web page [www.skat.dk](http://www.skat.dk). Here, they can add information to their tax income form electronically.

But we also wanted to involve the museum's visitors in this exhibition. It is common known that every single tax payer in Denmark has his or hers personal opinion on taxes, and we want to make use of that. To do that we have: a pin board, a question asked by our minister of taxes, yellow post-its and a pen. The question asked is: "If we can afford reduction of taxation, which tax is it most important to lower?" The answers are quite different. Some people just answer "Mine!" while other people go more into details in their

answers like "The basic tax - it is most socially fair".

It is a very simple way of involving our visitors but it is our impression that most visitors like to be involved and become part of the exhibition by adding their answers. Their opinion is just as good as anybody else's and is a worthy contribution to the exhibition.

The pin board is used by other museums around the world. In Australia, you will find them at museums like migration museums where difficult matters are discussed on these boards. Because you stay anonymous and because the museum is a safe, neutral space people feel secure with speaking up. It is a primitive way of doing it and a primitive design – but it works.

PIN BOARD – INTERACTIVE PART OF THE EXHIBITION "THE TAX OF YOU AND ME"



# FINLAND

## USING FILMS AT THE FINNISH CUSTOMS MUSEUM

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS: JANNE NOKKI



THE FINNISH CUSTOMS MUSEUM, LOCATED IN THE SO-CALLED "HAMILTON-POLHEM CURTAIN" FROM THE 1770'S

### The Premises

The Finnish Customs Museum is a relatively small museum with a more or less "traditional" outlook. For exhibition uses there are three rooms of different sizes. The building is over 200 years old and the interior walls far from straight and ruled. The passageways between rooms are narrow. In a small and intimate historical atmosphere, the use of moving image can be very impressive.

### 2007: Encouraging Experience

In the 2007 temporary theme exhibition "From Liquors to Limes: Celebrating the 100 years of Customs Laboratory" a modern DVD player and a large TV screen were used for the first time. The video was shot at the Customs Laboratory. The film was nearly four minutes and consisted of different consumer safety tests done for toys, the highlight being their flammability. It proved to be very interesting for all, from small children to senior citizens, regardless of their nationality. It usually provoked a lively discussion on the matter with the guide.

One crucial observation was that more than three minutes is for too much for most visitors. The video could have been cut to less than two minutes. This was especially noticed during guided tours of the exhibition. Another problem with the video was that it was directly visible from the entrance. It drew people towards it like a magnet, which resulted in people largely ignoring the exhibition. The storyline was lost at the first instance. However, the experience was a positive one.

### 2008: Two Films

In the 2008 exhibition "Women at Finnish Customs" a digitized excerpt from a historical film was used. It was a two-and-half-minute clip from the PR film "Customs Work" from the year 1973. In the film women are attending the customs control course for the first time in history, and the film also shows female office clerks and customs experts at their work. To modern viewers the film appears a bit funny, characteristic of the 1970's serious ideology of information.

This year the equipment was located in the middle of the exhibition. The exhibition room itself was covered from the entrance with a half wall. Behind the wall the exhibition began, covering the room from left to right. A person entering the exhibition heard the sound of the video but only saw it after seeing the beginning of the exhibition. This time the film was largely ignored by visitors, except for customs officers.

In the permanent exhibition, there was also a clip from Finnish Channel Four News from 2001. It was in connection with a large and complex object, a spirits filter designed to separate smuggled alcohol for the black market. The newsreel was largely used to explain the equipment on display. It seemed to be very interesting for most visitors, even those who did not understand the language. The pace was rather fast in a way people are used to see on television. Also the length, approximately 1:30, was ideal.

### 2009 and Beyond

The main problem with film material is language. Non-Finnish visitors will certainly find old films commented in Finnish boring. Using translated subtitles needs a lot of work. This year the problem was solved by using a label in Swedish and English. The main point is that there has to be some action in the film that can somehow be understood without any knowledge of Finnish.

For old films the museum should have a special "movie theatre" area. Another option is to edit a new film from excerpts because their narrative usually is too slow for modern people to follow. But the use of film must not be an end in itself. It should be part of the story that is to be told.



THE LOCATION OF THE 1973 FILM EXCERPT  
IN THE 2008 EXHIBITION

THE FIRST ROOM OF  
THE 2007 EXHIBITION  
AND THE LOCATION OF  
THE VIDEO



# FRANCE

## THE CUSTOMS NATIONAL MUSEUM: A “STEP BY STEP” RENOVATION

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS: RENATA PSTRAG



THE NEW WELCOME AREA AT THE FRENCH  
CUSTOMS NATIONAL MUSEUM

## RENOVATION OF THE LIGHTNING OF THE FRENCH CUSTOMS NATIONAL MUSEUM



The French Customs national museum gathers a collection of about 12,000 artefacts, it also has an research center with a library, archives and over 20,000 photographs.

The building was originally built in 1738 for the “Ferme Générale”, ancestor of the customs administration under royalty. It has always hosted the customs services. During the seventies, a part of the gallery was used as a parking, the other part was partitioned with offices. The complete renovation of the gallery started in 1982, the stoned walls and the tiled floor were revealed as they were initially conceived. The museum was opened to the public on June 22nd, 1984.

The story line is organised in 3 steps: first a historical presentation of the French customs administration, from modern times to the French Revolution, to Napoleonic times, to the 20th century. Then follows a “Customs at work” section where the weapons, uniforms, tools, and accessories of the customs officers are displayed. Eventually, the main trends of fraud are presented thanks to remarkable artefacts, mostly seized by customs services.

Since the opening of the museum in 1984, no big change has occurred in the presentation. Because of the important financial costs and the little human resources, it can be said that the different curators have chosen a “step by step” strategy for the renovation of the museum, rather than an overall change. It has the advantage of requesting fewer and “smaller” budget every year, and obtaining them regularly. It is also well adapted for the museum as the general story line is felt to be still quite relevant.

### Improvements in the gallery

**1. renovation of the lightning:** the windows were covered with specific material in 1999, to improve the general preservation of the artefacts presented. The showcases' inside lightning was changed for optical fiber in 2005. In 2007 and 2008, the general lightning of the gallery was changed, allowing to light its wonderful vaults.

### 2. renovation of the story line:

a renovation of the showcases was done in 1997: items were removed, explanation texts were re-written and some presentations were improved. In 2004, a specific plinthe was built to enhance the presentation of the authentic painting by the master of Impressionism, Claude Monet, hosted by the museum. All text panels were again re-written in 2007 in a larger and more readable font, and the information were re-organised to be better understood. All the texts were gathered in a single document that has been edited, plastified, binded, and translated in English, German and Spanish. It is at the public disposal at the welcome area.

### Renovation of the entrance area

**2006:** replacement of the reception desk

**2007:** extension of the welcome area: museum shop and cloak-room, replacement of the old seats

**2008:** computerised ticket software

### New image

**since 2006:** edition of an annual programme

**2007:** choice of a logo, graphic identity and launching of a proper and regularly updated website:

[www.musee-douanes.fr](http://www.musee-douanes.fr)

### New public services

**since 2007:** there are 2 temporary exhibitions every year

**2008:** 2 new events to appeal to a new audience: Music Day and tale readings  
Come visit us!

# Was ist Was?

FINDEN SIE DIE RICHTIGEN TARIFNUMMERN!

## SPIELZEUG ODER PUPPE?

**RICHTIG!** Der Europäische Gerichtshof entschied 1985, dass der Monchhichi ein Spielzeug ist – seine Kleidung muss zusätzlich verzollt werden

POS.-NR.: 9503  
SPELZEUG

POS.-NR.: 9502  
PUPPE

AN INTERACTION TO FIND THE CORRECT TARIFF HEADING – PUPPET OR TOY?

CUSTOMS INFORMATION TERMINAL



# GERMANY

## “WAS IST WAS?”

## INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS OF THE EXHIBITION

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS: GERMAN CUSTOMS MUSEUM

### **An interaction to find the correct tariff heading**

The guests learn from four examples the meaning of the tariff heading. For each example they can choose between two possibilities, a correct one and an incorrect one. While pressing a button with a heading of the Harmonised Commodity Description and Coding System (HS) the visitors can test if their decision is right or wrong. The red switch (wrong switch) explains why the result is incorrect. The green switch (right switch) shows the correct version of this interaction. The interaction is like a game and shows the visitors how to use the customs tariff.

### **Dog-handler-Quiz**

Here the guests get information about the customs dog-handler Service. By means of five questions the visitors can test their knowledge about the detector dogs. They can choose between four answers. A virtual dog shows the answer on the screen. The dog is sad about a wrong answer. But he's happy with the right decision and he will get a virtual bone. At the end of the game they can see, how many bones the dog has got. Based on the number of bones they can judge if they are a qualified dog-handler. Children love this game very well.

### **Customs Information Terminal**

The terminal shows the website of the German Customs Administration ([www.zoll.de](http://www.zoll.de)). The visitors may get all information about the German Customs Administration and about the Federal Ministry of Finances. They may find the customs regulations, e. g. the new incoming regulations, protection of endangered species, all about the postal traffic, importation of weapons, etc. They also may find answers about customs procedures, fiscal questions or the recruitment of staff. They also may find supervisory functions or information about the Customs Skiing Team, the German Customs Museum, the customs auction, which is very popular, conversion rates and publications. This terminal awakes the interest on the customs service. A lot of people reported us later, that they inform themselves in their spare time about customs, be it out of curiosity or even for the car auction.

### **“I pack my suitcase”**

By “I pack my suitcase” the visitors may test their knowledge about (travel) duty free allowance. They pack a virtual suitcase. On the screen they find a store with a lot of goods: coffee, cigarettes, spirits, chocolate, perfume, mp3-players, watches, digicams, cameras etc. The suitcase has to be packed within the limits of the customs free allowances. After finishing, they have to choose, like at an airport, the correct – red or green – exit. Now they get to know, if they have chosen the correct exit, if they are within the limits and if they have to pay duties and/or taxes. A lot of visitors pack their suitcase until the exit is ok or they are within the (travel) duty free allowance. This is important to understand the daily work of a customs officer. Many visitors will start their next vacation with a good conscience.

# ZÖLLNERINNEN UND ZÖLLNER IN EUROPA





# HUNGARY

## “NEW DESIGN” IN THE MUSEUM OF THE HUNGARIAN CUSTOMS AND FINANCE GUARD

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS: ILDIKÓ VARGA



IMPRESSIONS OF THE MUSEUM OF THE HUNGARIAN CUSTOMS AND FINANCE GUARD

Many Hungarian museums have been making great efforts for a long time to put the principle of “New Design” into practice. More and more nice examples can be seen in this respect.

The permanent exhibition of the Museum of the Hungarian Customs and Finance Guard presents the body’s history in the way which is interesting mainly to the members of the body or to delegations. The objects are displayed behind showcases; the visitor is consequently a passive observer / listener. Interaction is only possible with the help of the guide. In addition, the topics of “customs” and “finance” are difficult to grasp, to represent, even with the help of objects.

In spite of all this, the museum is constantly endeavouring to make the exhibitions more enjoyable and comprehensible for a wider, non-professional public, especially for children and students.

The rebuilding of the permanent exhibition is not feasible at this moment, neither is its complementation with new elements, because of lack of space.

What can the museum do after all? What possibilities do we have of realising the principle of “New Design”?

It is the organisation of temporary exhibitions, festivals, programs that give us the opportunity to interactivity. The Museums’ Night, which is one of the most important events in the museum’s life, perfectly exemplifies this. It is an annual festival in Hungary, in which almost every museum participates with exciting programs until dawn. The Museum of the Hungarian Customs and Finance Guard organised programs with the title of “Forgeries’ Night” this year, presenting the different forms of counterfeiting and the fight against it. Visitors could listen to interesting presentations and fill in playful questionnaires for precious prizes. Everybody could try different kinds of special customs’ control instruments; the most popular of them was the cavity detector device. Visitors could bring with them a presumably fake product and specialists helped to decide whether it was real or not, pointing at the signs of counterfeiting. In the course of the evening the fake goods were destroyed by children with great delight. The highlight of the night was the demonstration of the commando group of the Hungarian customs and finance guard, in which children could take part in.

All these programs are really popular not only among children but adults as well. This success encourages the museum to seize the opportunity to put “new design” into practice.

# ICELAND

## CUSTOMS MUSEUM REYKJAVÍK ICELAND

TEXT: ARSAELL ARSAELSSON / PHOTOGRAPHS: CUSTOMS MUSEUM REYKJAVÍK ICELAND

At the annual meeting of the customs union at the year of 2002, the Customs Officers Union decided to start collecting historical artefacts and take the first step in establishing a Customs Museum in Iceland. A letter was sent to all present and retired Customs officers and they were asked to give away to the Museum, all things that could have meaning for a Customs museum. That worked well and many en-

thusiasts came forward with a helping hand. All Customs officers who made a contribution gave their work. At the Customs Officers Union's 70th anniversary 8. december 2005 a small exhibition from the customs work and history was established.

After the exhibition Mr. Snorri Olsen chief of Customs in Reykjavik announced that he was willing to cooperate with the union in further

steps to establish a Customs museum. In the Customs House in Reykjavik is a 120 square meters former police station which Mr. Olsen has offered to house the museum. This police station has been empty for several years and has to be renovated. The station has many possibilities to design a museum that could be very interesting. For example there is an old prison cell which gives many ideas for creative minds.

The location of the Customs house is in Reykjavik center near the harbour. So the museum will have the benefit of good location where the tourist traffic is great, especially during the summer. A lot of work has to be done and a 5 persons committee has to make decisions about how to start and how to use the budget wisely.



PICTURE OF THE ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION

# IRELAND

## DREAM TO REALITY

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS: REVENUE MUSEUM DUBLIN

March 7, 2006 was a bright, cold Friday in Dublin, with people looking forward to another weekend. But for those us involved in the Revenue Museum Committee, it was much more than another day. In fact, a dream was about to realised when the Minister for Finance would officially open our new Revenue Museum in Dublin Castle.

If I, as one involved in the project from Day 1, was asked to highlight the major milestones that brought us to this important day, I would say

1. The commitment of the Revenue Board
2. The unwavering dedication of the Museum Committee
3. The IACM Conference and General Assembly in Dublin in September 2005
4. The buoyant Irish economy of the time
5. The expertise and advice of experienced architects, designers and other professionals.
6. Obtaining a superb location
7. A strong belief that we had a story that would interest people with little knowledge of our role and functions in society.



ENTRANCE HALL OF THE REVENUE MUSEUM DUBLIN



NEW EXHIBITION OF THE REVENUE MUSEUM DUBLIN



Over that ten years while much research had been carried out and artefacts were stored, we were unsure how to translate into an accessible museum. At the opening of the IACM Conference in Dublin in 1995, our Chairman, Frank Daly, announced that the Crypt underneath the Chapel Royal in Dublin Castle had been secured for the Revenue Museum. Now that we had practically everything, the next, and most crucial, step was to pull it all together as a museum.

We were blessed when an architect was appointed by our Office of Public Works. Not only had she been actively involved with our earlier attempts at a museum, but she had vast experience of interpreting and presenting collections for other museums. Carefully examining the premises allocated to us, she suggested that the existing layout of a central space surrounded by eight alcoves could be ideal for a museum if properly utilised. This was great news.

A plan was then drawn up to have a strong central group of display cases linked by storyboards sketching the story of revenue collection and protection in Ireland from the earliest times to the present day. Indeed, the Board of Revenue insisted that we blend the past with the present and incorporate all facets of our wide-ranging work. Unlike some member countries of IACM, Ireland has long since integrated the administration of Taxes, Customs, Excise, Stamp Duties. It was decided that each of the alcoves would contain a themed display of some aspect of our work e.g. Brewing and Distilling, Stamp Duties, Information Technology and Variety of Taxes.

We underlined the need for humour to lighten the serious nature of much of the exhibits. It was also agreed not to hold back on the criminal damage to society with drugs, counterfeits

and protection of endangered species. In addition, we insisted on at least nine multimedia installations in order to communicate in a media comfortable and attractive to younger visitors.

The importance of IACM to the Revenue Museum cannot be over emphasised. We were so fortunate to build up a network of contacts who had already travelled this road to the opening of a museum, or revamping an existing museum to attract a wider audience. Our visits to Rotterdam, Liverpool, Antwerp and other IACM museums were tremendous benefit to us. In that context, we are eternally indebted to both Liverpool and Rotterdam for loaning or gifting to us certain artefacts that have become integral parts of our displays. Indeed, Rotterdam supplied us with cartoons deriding certain taxes and duties. They helped us to supplement the more humorous aspects of revenue collection, which, as those of us who worked in Customs or Taxes, know is an essential commodity for survival. We were also very fortunate with our contacts in the National Museum of Ireland, especially Glenn Thompson who is a mine of knowledge and Michael Kenny who so kindly offered us some Revenue material on loan.

On that bright March morning, somehow all these elements began to look at home here in a cohesive museum. The pressure, struggle and difficulties to have everything in place merged into a sense of pride that we had actually achieved it. Many of our visitors commented on the location where the past seems very much in the present. And that was our objective – to honour the thousands of men and women who worked, unpraised and unsung, to collect and protect the Irish revenue over the centuries. To date, over twenty thousand people have visited the Revenue Museum, Dublin Castle.

# LUXEMBOURG

## THE MUSEUM LOOKS CONFIDENTLY IN THE FUTURE

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPH: CUSTOMS MUSEUM LUXEMBOURG

Since the opening in the year 2004, the Luxembourg customs museum in Esch/Alzette (situated in the south of the country) has received no major changes of its main body. Only two changes were realized. A new room was added with the office of the former customs director and a distillery was built up.

The board of the museum isn't satisfied neither with the place where the museum is located, nor with the building itself. It is very difficult to find the museum for a visit, if you don't know the city. The building belongs to the national rail company and it is in a very poor shape. The entrance isn't suitable for disabled persons. Rooms for the administrative personal are missing. The rooms of the museum are also used by the customs office of Esch/Alzette and various customs organisations. So it is understandable that the customs museum hasn't got any major changes for the future.

These disadvantages are well known by the responsible people of the museum and they had to learn from the mistakes done at the beginning of the museum. Plans for a new design aren't missing, knowing that there will



FUTURE BUILDING OF THE CUSTOMS MUSEUM LUXEMBOURG

be a possibility to move to another, more suitable location with completely new rooms.

The customs museum is open for every new idea and proposition. The responsible people looked with great interest at the changes in other museums, so the opening of the new museum in Dublin or the renovations and new design in Bordeaux, Hamburg and Liverpool or the plans in Rotterdam and Antwerp.

The customs museum hopes to be able to leave Esch/Alzette in about six years. The project foreseen in the city of Pétange (located in a touristic region in the south of Luxembourg, near to the French and Belgian border) is a cooperation with other museums, as for example the police museum, fire protection and civil protection museum. Before and during the installation of the museums in the new rooms, museum experts will be present and give professional advice. The exhibition can be visited with or without a guide. There is even the possibility to organise practical demonstrations, temporary exhibitions, conferences and presentations.

So the Luxembourg customs museum can look confidently in the future, even if the actual situation isn't the best one.

# NETHERLANDS

## NEW DESIGN IN THE TAX & CUSTOMS MUSEUM IN ROTTERDAM

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS: TAX & CUSTOMS MUSEUM ROTTERDAM

The Tax & Customs Museum in Rotterdam was founded in 1937 by Prof. J. van der Poel, chief inspector for import rights and excise duty. The museum contains a wide array of customs- and tax related objects: paintings, coins, tax-receipts, uniforms, weapons, devices for measurements and an internationally prominent and unique collection of fiscal stamps.

### **New presentations: new design for the permanent and temporary exhibitions**

The historical development of taxation in the Netherlands will no longer be chronologically but thematically presented. Instead of focusing on the government of taxes, the institute for levying taxes, we will focus on the taxpayer: the museum visitor!

The point of departure of the new presentation of the Tax & Customs Museum will be the issues of "Trust" and "Justice". To establish a new presentation, improvement of the two museum buildings and the museum's routing facilities are inevitable.

The three main themes of the new presentation are: why do I pay taxes, how and when do I pay taxes and what happens if I do not pay taxes?

### **These themes are approached from three angles**

1. Historical experience: historical examples as illustrations of the themes
2. Collection orientated expansion: a historical survey of the three themes, based on the museum collection and tax-related stories

HISTORIC LINEAR MEASURING STICK – EXHIBIT OF THE TAX & CUSTOMS MUSEUM ROTTERDAM



3. Interactive confrontations: a personal approach of the museum visitors to get them more involved with the various themes and let them actively experience the issues of "Trust" and "Justice".

### **In addition there will be presentations aiming at certain target groups**

1. An interactive "wailing wall" where visitors can publicly express their ideas and opinions, as well as lodge complaints, about taxation (a certain control from the museum is required here)
2. A tax office "through the ages" where museum visitors can do research (photo's, films etc.).
3. A Customs Activity Space for children, e.g. a ship simulator
4. An work of art which "displays" a thermometer of national (tax)income and expenses

The timetable for renovation started in May 2008. The start of the renovation work will be in January 2010 and is to be completed end 2011. The reopening of the new Tax & Customs Museum is planned early 2012.



"TAX PARADISE" – THE MUSEUM CAFÉ AS A TAX HEAVEN  
DESIGN FOR E NEW MUSEUM CAFÉ & MEDIA CENTRE



“TOGETHER” – DESIGN FOR TWO ROOMS OF THE TAX & CUSTOMS MUSEUM THAT ILLUSTRATES THE ORIGINS OF TAXATION IN THE NETHERLANDS AND THE ROLE THAT TAXES AND CUSTOMS PLAY IN DUTCH SOCIETY

# UNITED KINGDOM

## “SEIZED” REVENUE & CUSTOMS UNCOVERED

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS: HM CUSTOMS & EXCISE NATIONAL MUSEUM

ENTER A WORLD WHERE  
THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT  
THEY SEEM.



### **The making of a new gallery**

After 10 years of intensive visitor interaction our galleries required some attention. The displays were tired and did not reflect the new department. A change was required and so began the process to generate a new gallery. There were 3 distinct phases: evaluation, designing and installing, launching the new gallery.

### **Evaluating the current gallery and new themes.**

It was recognised that some of the existing gallery and themes were enjoyed by the visitor and some were not. Through evaluation it was determined how well the display and interactives worked. Talking to visitors and focus groups allowed new themes to be presented and their reaction recorded. This also allowed curators to leave the sanctity of their desks and collections and meet the very people who would be their visitors! This process helped inform the development of an outline brief.

### **Designing the new gallery**

All the themes to be explored in the gallery are drawn together and encapsulated in an “outline brief”, the first stage of a design brief. This outline presented objects and images which would help tell the story. At this stage a designer could be commissioned. A London based company specialising in museum design, At Large, were employed. Their critical role was to “interrogate” the main themes and agree storylines and message of the gallery. There would be vigorous debate and argument before final agreement on what the gallery would explore and how. Seven key themes were agreed:

#### **1. War and protest**

This area reveals how taxes were imposed to pay for war and defence and critically how people have reacted to the burden of tax.

#### **2. Tax Evasion and smuggling**

This area explores both modern evasion such as tobacco, counterfeit and fuel contrasting with tea smuggling of the 17th C.

#### **3. Port**

The port can be seen as the frontier where there are controls on people and trade. A focus of this control is the Custom House and the administration associated with it.



# ADULTERATION

ASSETS

CONFISCATION

**Adulteration**  
To tax something correctly, you have to know what it is.

Excise followed by Customs were the first people to use scientific tests to check the goods they were investigating. They often found a usual and dangerous thing was being added to food and drinks to make them go further.

At that time, they were just interested in ensuring the right tax was being paid. Today, government laboratories carry out internationally recognised tests and

The protection of our health is paramount.



ADULTERATION INTERACTIVE



TAX EVASION STEEL GIRDER  
TOBACCO SMUGGLING

**SEIZED!**  
REVENUE & CUSTOMS UNCOVERED



ILLUSTRATION FROM THE SEIZED  
MARKETING CAMPAIGN

#### 4. Control of Trade

This explores the inland story following the “ride officer” around a market town and surrounds. Tax on income, modern controls on business and carousel fraud are highlighted.

#### 5. Organised Crime

This explores the smuggling of weapons and illicit drugs in modern society. It is contrasted with smuggling from the past and counter measures employed today such as use of cutters at sea and specialist searches at the frontier.

#### 6. Environment

Dominated by a display of seized endangered species, issues around the environment and quarantine controls are explored

#### 7. Investigation

This area includes a range of interactives which focus on the need for vigilance and observation. Adulterated product and observing people and events are a key component.

#### Interactives

Interactives form an integral part of the new gallery. The appropriate choice of specialist designer for a mechanical or computer based technology was critical. “Rummage” space takes the form of a ship’s cabin to be ‘explored’ by the visitor. This contrasts with the “cutter” interactive which is computer based allowing the visitor to take control of a modern cutter. The Learning officers were an essential part of the core team made up from specialists from HMRC and museum staff to develop the interactives.

Many obstacles were overcome these included timetabling issues, late delivery of display cases, unclear design layouts, multiple contractors on site at the same time. The gallery was completed to schedule and ready for the first visitor.

#### Launching the new gallery

After so much effort and labour it is worth promoting the new offer to the widest possible audience. A marketing campaign used “teaser trailers” incorporating a toy doll image in local airports, train stations and on buses. Press were invited to a preview event. Local Radio ran adverts promoting “Seized” as a new venue and where present at the launch weekend. HMRC supplied HM Cutter “Sentinel” and detector dog teams gave demonstrations throughout the launch weekend. A team of role players and demonstrators supplemented the gallery displays and activities. “Seized” welcomed around 2,500 visitors at the launch weekend.

KEY THEME:  
WAR AND PROTEST





# ICOM REPORT

## 2008 HAS BEEN A MORE “QUIET” YEAR FOR ICOM

PHOTOGRAPH: JEAN-PIERRE REUTER

It seems like the organisation is recovering after last year's general conference in Vienna. There is therefore not much to report this year.

The primary thing, we should think about is if we should and how we should participate in the International Museum Day. The date of the International Museum Day is always around May 18. In 2009, that is a Monday. It might be a good idea to place activities on Sunday the 17th of May.

The theme for next year's International Museum Day is "Museums and Tourism". To be more precise, it will focus on sustainable cultural tourism. It might be possible for IACM-member museums to focus on the work, our individual customs organisations around the world are doing: fighting illicit traffic, the CITES-work etc. We do not have much time to do a common exhibition, so it might be a good idea to contact your national ICOM committees if you think your museum can contribute to the theme. It is

of course a great possibility to do some PR for our own organisation, IACM as affiliated member of ICOM.

I am very sorry, that I can not be present in this year's IACM conference because of some troubles moving into our new storage facilities. And I am very sorry, that I will not be present at next year's conference either because I will be on maternal leave. I hope one of you would keep updated on what is going on in the work of ICOM. Otherwise, I hope to be back in 2010 with a new ICOM-report.

Have a great conference.  
All best,

**Tora Ribers**  
**ToldSkat Museum**  
**Denmark**  
**August 31, 2008**



# IMPRESSIONS

16TH CONFERENCE OF IACM  
HAMBURG - GERMANY, 3rd-5th OF SEPT. 2008  
THEME: NEW DESIGN

PHOTOGRAPHS: JEAN-PIERRE REUTER AND THE GERMAN CUSTOMS MUSEUM





# PROGRAM

## Wednesday 3rd September 2008

- 15.00** Gathering at the hotel lobby
- 16.00-18.00** Guided Tour at German Customs Museum
- 18.00- 21.00** Official welcome at the German Customs Museum
- Greetings: Christian Schaade (German Customs Museum)*
- Speech: Paddy Ryan (President of IACM)*

## Thursday 4th September 2008

- 08.30-09.00** Start of the Conference
- 09.00-10.45** Presentation & discussion "New design":
- Dream to reality: the birth of the Irish Revenue Museum – Myles Hollowed*
- "Seized" gallery HMRC Museum – Steve Butler / Joyce Parr*
- 10.45-11.00** Coffee break
- 11.00-12.45** Presentation & discussion "New design"
- Tax & Customs Museum, The Kingdom's Treasure Chest-Wim Van Es*
- German Customs Museum: reconstruction of the exhibition – Susanne Mehrkühler*
- 13.00-14.00** Break
- 14.45-16.15** Introduction and Tour at the emigration Museum "BallinStadt"
- 19.00-22.00** Welcome Dinner
- Greetings: Christian Schaade (German Customs Museum)*
- Speeches: Colette Hercher (Bundesfinanzdirektion Nord)*
- Paddy Ryan (President of IACM)*

## Friday 5th September 2008

- 08.45-10.15** Start of the general assembly part 1 (members only)
- Report of President*
- Report of Treasurer*
- Report of ICOM Representative*
- Report of working parties*
- Expansion of membership*
- Report: 40th anniversary customs union project group – Michaël van Giel*
- Newsletter*
- 10.15-10.45** coffee break
- 10.45-12.30** Resume / future working parties  
Election of President, Secretary and Treasurer
- 12.30-13.30** Lunch
- 13:45-15.00** Start of the general assembly part 2 (members only)
- Future Conferences*
- Miscellaneous:*
- Presentation of the book: Die deutsche Zollverwaltung in Luxemburg 1940 bis 1944 – André C. N. Friden*
- Presentation France: Le musée national des douanes – une rénovation pas à pas – Renata Pstrag*
- Presentation of DVD: "Big time smuggler" – Rickard Bengtsson*
- 16.00** Closing reception

# DELEGATES AND GUESTS OF IACM 2008



Photograph: Jean-Pierre Reuter



Photograph: Jürgen Hegemann

*"On 29.01.2009 I visited on my vacation trip through New Zealand Jim Boyes from the New Zealand Customs Museum. New Zealand is one of the newest members joining the IACM. The small but nice exhibition is located in the NZ Maritime Museum Auckland. It was so valuable for me to meet Jim. I have to thank him very much for the time he spent with me. I wish him, and I'm sure, all IACM members agree, an enjoyable retirement and all the best for his future. All the best for you Jim."*

**Jürgen Hegemann**

## FUTURE CONFERENCE IN LIVERPOOL

The HM Revenue & Customs National Museum is pleased to invite you to the 17th Conference of IACM and the General Assembly, which is to be held in Liverpool from **Wednesday, 9th September – Friday, 11th September 2009**

**HMR Revenue & Customs National Museum  
Merseyside Maritime Museum**

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Photograph: HM Customs & Excise National Museum

MERSEYSIDE MARITIME MUSEUM FROM ACROSS THE HISTORIC QUAYSIDES

# THE MEMBERS OF IACM

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СНИМКИ НА ОБЪЕКТИТЕ СЪЩЕ УЛМОВО БИР  
ОЛИКТЕ СЪЩЕ УЛМОВО

## DUNKLE GESCHÄFTE

SCHMUGGELVERSTECKE AUFGEDECKT



001



003



002



004



005



006



007



013

ZOLLVERWALTUNG



Die Entwicklung der Zollverwaltung  
in der Bundesrepublik

