

6. To conserve or to restore, that is the question!



THE WARWICK VASE



THE WARWICK VASE WITH ORIGINAL 2ND CENTURY PIECES
MARKED IN RED

So what is the difference between conservation and restoration? Conservation involves work that stabilises the object to minimise deterioration and try to ensure the object is available for future generations to enjoy. Restoration involves work that helps to return the object more towards its original condition so people can understand and appreciate it better.

For example, the magnificent Warwick Vase at the Burrell is a late 18th century restoration incorporating the original 2nd century Roman pieces. The Warwick Vase is old enough to be an antiquity in its own right now, but if we dug up those pieces nowadays we would probably not perform such a reconstruction. The Tang dynasty Chinese horse was originally in many pieces and was restored to the condition it is in now before Sir William Burrell bought it. This kind of restoration would also be carried out today.

TANG DYNASTY HORSE IN POLYCHROME GLAZE



As the Boppard Conservation Project progresses the big question of just how much restoration work should be done will be high on Marie's mind.

What do you think?