1. Administrative Details

1.1 - Name of National Committee: United States Committee of the Blue Shield

1.2 - Date Report Completed: April 3, 2023

1.3 - Reporting period covered: 01 January 2022 – 31 December 2022

1.4 - Names, positions and emails of all those who were the governing body/ trustees / principal officers on the date the report was approved or who served during in the reporting period:

Patty Gerstenblith, President:
Brian Daniels, Vice President:
Laurie Rush, Secretary:
Perry McGowan, Treasurer:
Jan C. K. Anderson:
Suzanne Davis:
Jacob Nadal:
James K. Reap:
Timur Tusiray:
Corine Wegener:
Eryl Wentworth:

1.5 - Address of the main office:

U. S. Committee of the Blue Shield, 17605 Charity Lane, Germantown, MD 20874

1.6 - Website and social media (if applicable):

Website: [https://www.uscbs.org/](https://www.uscbs.org/)
Twitter: [https://twitter.com/uscbs_org](https://twitter.com/uscbs_org)
Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/uscbs.org](https://www.facebook.com/uscbs.org)
1.7 – Email the Blue Shield email should forward to:

2. Income:

What is the total income of your committee? What are the primary sources? (Donations, grants, etc?)

During our fiscal year, which runs July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022, USCBS had income of US $7,464.44 and expenses of US $3429.36. USCBS receives unrestricted income from membership dues and donations.


Explain the activities & projects carried out over the year under the Areas of Activity

The annual report should tell the story of the organisation and put into context what was achieved in the reporting year against the achievement of its longer-term strategy. The annual report under this section should Provide a clear review of the organisation’s performance for the relevant year as well showing how the current year’s strategic performance links to the achievement of the longer-term strategy of the organisation.

These could include: grants applied for; talks given; conferences held; training courses run; work to support new legislation; working groups attended, etc.

Please provide as much detail as possible – for example, length of event, audience, and so on.

USCBS is governed by a Board of Directors composed of heritage, cultural, legal and financial professionals from across the United States. This year, Jan C. K. Anderson and Suzanne Davis joined the board. Meetings are held periodically during the year. The organization receives financial contributions from, and offers annual membership to, individuals and institutions. Members receive periodic communications on developing issues, events, and news. The organization has approximately 100 members and has established Memoranda of Understanding with cultural affiliates with which it regularly collaborates.

The USCBS continued to rebuild its program of work in 2022, after the shocks and difficulties of recent years, including the death of then-President, Dr. Nancy Wilkie, in 2021, and the continued obstacles of pandemic and economic strains. Travel became easier in 2022 and members were able to be more active in national and international projects. A partnership for monitoring impacts of the war in Ukraine stands out as a response to an urgent crisis. Members of the USCBS Board
have continued to engage in outreach on issues of cultural heritage protection through public speaking and participation in legislative activity.

3.1 - Law, policy development and implementation:

USCBS members have continued our working partnerships with the United States Military and Department of Defense. Through their work as staff of the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative (SCRI), members support an agreement with the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command related to implementation of the 1954 Hague Convention. Among these activities is a working group on Department of Defense policies. One Board member serves as Chair of the Blue Shield International Working Group on International Trafficking in Cultural Objects.

USCBS continued efforts to find a legislative vehicle to address the requirement for the US Department of Defense to appoint a cultural heritage protection coordinator as required under the 2018 National Defense Authorization Act but was not able to get this provision included in the 2022 NDAA.

USCBS members gave presentations to allied professional associations on topics in law and policy of cultural heritage preservation. These included:

- The panel, “Current Events and Heritage Protection: Efforts to Protect Culture at Risk,” Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America, held online, January 2022. Moderated by Brian I. Daniels, with presentations by Corine Wegener and Katharyn Hanson.

- “Cultural Heritage Destruction in Ukraine” American Association of Law Schools, May 13, 2022, by Zoom (presented by P. Gerstenblith)

- “Collecting and Gathering Information During a Disaster,” ICOM Triennial Meeting, Prague, Czechia, August 2022 (presented by Brian I. Daniels).

3.2 - Education, training, and capacity building:

Education and training activities are an active part of USCBS work, including fellowships with graduate and postgraduate legal scholars interested in public heritage protection law.

On March 24-25, 2022, USCBS held its annual meeting and conference by zoom. The meeting reintroduced the USCBS after a hiatus of about three years. The topics addressed included Russia and heritage sites during the armed conflict in Ukraine and the situation in Armenia and Azerbaijan. The program is available on the USCBS youtube site: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=us+committee+of+the+blue+shield.
This year, USCBS members attended a ceremonial installation of a plaque honoring Lieutenant Commander George Stout at his boyhood home in Winterset, Iowa. Stout is considered one the founders of the modern discipline of art conservation and was instrumental in establishing the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives teams, aka “Monuments Men”, part of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs Division during WWII. The unveiling took place on the 125th anniversary of Stout’s birth.

Board members participated in the publicity and grading of entries in the American Red Cross essay competition on the subject of protection of cultural property in armed conflict.

A member presented a lecture on the Blue Shield at “Diplomacy and Management of Cultural Heritage, Historical and Cultural Heritage Capacity Building Program”, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 2022. Also in Kazakhstan, a member presented information on the Blue Shield at a meeting in Almaty, to a group of young Kazakh diplomats at a capacity building program.

Members supported the AMOT program (the new Monuments Officers) training at the Smithsonian in August, including an introduction to USCBS and the Blue Shield Movement given by USCBS President, Dr. Patty Gerstenblith. The course included U.S. Army Monuments Officers and their Monuments Officer counterparts from five other countries. The training program was led by Board Member Corine Wegener.

Two USCBS Board members (C. Wegener and P. Gerstenblith) prepared segments as part of the BSI Training Modules 2 and 3.

USCBS members gave presentations to allied professional associations on topics in cultural heritage preservation. These included:

- “A World at War: Protecting Cultural Heritage in Times of Conflict” American Society for Overseas Research, May 12, 2022, by Zoom (presented by P. Gerstenblith)

- “Exploring preservation through a legal and ethical lens: The International Perspective” New Jersey Historic Preservation Trust, June 2, 2022, by Zoom (presented by P. Gerstenblith)


Presentation to high school class on Blue Shield and cultural property protection in Ukraine, May 2022 (presented by USCBS member, Brian Glassman)
3.3 - Proactive protection and risk preparedness:

Members participated in proactive digital archiving projects for Ukrainian government, news, and cultural information online, including the Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online initiative (SUCHO) and projects hosted by universities, NGOs, and government agencies.

The organization maintains a website and a Facebook page to further its membership and public outreach efforts to build awareness of cultural property protection. It has established Memoranda of Understanding with selected partner organizations with which it shares programming.

3.4 - Emergency response in disaster, domestic emergencies, and armed conflict:

Members engaged in a number of activities in response to war in Ukraine. Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative (SCRI), Virginia Museum of Natural History Cultural Heritage Monitoring Lab, and the University of Maryland Center for International Development and Conflict Management initiated a program of ongoing remote sensing and satellite imagery monitoring and analysis to record evidence of damage to cultural sites. The Conflict Observatory project is supported by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations. Individual members participated in work of the Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online project. Members coordinated with CHCC agencies to share information about known risks, threats, and capabilities to support response.

In a partnership with the Fulbright program, four Ukrainian scholars received full-time summer placements with various units at the Smithsonian Institution.

Members have worked to obtain Visas for at risk colleagues from Afghanistan and Ukraine to enter the US. Three individuals met the high-risk requirement and placements were found for them at Harvard and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Additional placements are planned.

USCBS had previously developed no-strike lists for Ukraine and provided these to the US Defense Intelligence Agency. DIA reported that they were in use and providing valuable information.

There was a workshop for protecting Ukrainian Museums [in winter], jointly led by USCBS members, ICCROM, and Smithsonian institution. USCBS board members also supported a special presentation about the safety of at-risk Ukrainian cultural heritage professionals with the Penn Cultural Heritage Center and the Smithsonian Institution in July 2022.

The work of USCBS is closely integrated in the United States with other organizations, including National Heritage Responders (NHR), CRI (Cultural Rescue Initiative), and Heritage Emergency National Task Force (HENTF). Collectively, and with support from a variety of local responders, these organizations responded to storm-related disasters in the Gulf Coast and fire-related disasters in the western States.
### 3.5 - Stabilisation, post-disaster recovery, and long-term/ongoing support:

Members also provided webinars and ongoing consultation on disaster recovery to institutions in Lebanon affected by the explosion of fertilizer storage in the Port of Beirut, and to the Jager Library at the University of Cape Town, SA, in partnership with Smithsonian CRI, Blue Shield Lebanon, IFLA, and US CHCC.

### 3.6 - Co-ordination (of Blue Shield and with other relevant organisations):

The work of USCBS is closely integrated in the United States to other national activities coordinated by government and non-governmental organizations. Chief among these NGOs are the American Institute for Conservation (AIC), Foundation for Advancement in Conservation (FAIC), National Heritage Responders (NHR) and Alliance for Response (AFR), and the Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative (CRI). Members who hold positions in government are engaged in the interagency Cultural Heritage Coordinating Committee (CHCC), which is directed to confer with USCBS as part of its authorizing legislation.

USCBS members also participate in projects through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Heritage Emergency National Task Force (HENTF). Collectively, these agencies and their partners presented training on developing disaster response plans and salvaging collections, as well as convened teams to monitor developing severe weather events to provide information to collections at risk.

Members of USCBS hold a variety of positions with allied NGOs and in government and support projects and ongoing programs including with the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), AIC and FAIC, FEMA, HENTF, US CHCC, CRI, ALA, Archaeological Institute of America, and IFLA.

### 4. Main issues faced:

Expansion of the USCBS board is a priority, and we have undertaken a review of knowledge, skills, and abilities on the board and needed for its growth. As we develop more board capacity, we will restore our ability to commission member work groups for specific projects and manage a more robust program of activities.

During the past year, we worked to redesign and relaunch the USCBS website. This was accomplished in early 2023. We also established a new USCBS Facebook page.
5. Future goals

Describe future plans to achieve strategic goals

We are in the process of reviewing the expertise and skills represented on our board and will develop a board expansion and diversity plan over the next year. Our goals are to add additional expertise to the board to support re-engagement with our membership, sponsoring public programs on a regular basis, and exploring new ways of engaging with, for example, the establishment of the U.S. Army’s new 38G/6V Heritage and Preservation Officer program in the military working on cultural property protection and with the Cultural Heritage Coordinating Committee.

In the coming year, we also plan to undertake a stakeholder-engaged strategic planning process to clarify our broader goals and then to develop an action plan to achieve them. This will assist with the board expansion project as well, by pinpointing areas where we need to add expertise in order to achieve specific goals.

6. Other

Through its connection to Newcastle University, BSI is sometimes able to access funding that can be shared with research institutions to further the work of Blue Shield. Does your national committee have any connections with research institutions interested in its work (e.g. in risk management, heritage protection, etc.). If yes, please supply the names and contact details here.

No