

Editorial

In 2003, the first special issue of *Heron* on natural stone appeared (Vol. 48), comprising contributions on the use and durability of Rhenish tuff in the Netherlands, black weathering of Bentheim and Obernkirchen sandstones derived from Germany, laser cleaning of Rakowicze sandstone obtained from Poland, the assessment of English Portland stone as a replacement stone for white Belgian sandy limestones and the durability of the latter, and an overview of the role of stylolites. The issue is not available in print anymore. The digital version may be found at the *Heron* website, heron.tudelft.nl. In the editorial, it was remarked that, though the supply of natural stone within the Dutch borders is rather limited, natural stone constitutes an important part of the building mass in many Dutch monuments. Obviously, this has not changed. Research into deterioration, replacement, conservation and treatment of natural stone, both as basis for preventive conservation and intervention, has been continuing in close collaboration between TNO Built Environment and Geosciences and the Department @MIT of the Faculty of Architecture of Delft University of Technology.

The present *Heron* special issue on natural stone comprises five new contributions, dealing with the evaluation of salt damage of Morley limestone (Nijland & Van Hees), an oolithic limestone from France used in the Netherlands as replacement stone in the 1920's, the assessment of the state of conservation of a Middle Neolithic flint mine exploited in the soft, porous Maastricht limestone in the south of the Netherlands (Van Hees & Nijland), the evaluation of the choices made in replacement of natural stone during 20th and late 19th century interventions at Our Lady's Church, Breda (Quist), and laser cleaning of Obernkirchen sandstone (Nijland et al.)

Part of this research was commissioned by national and local authorities and owners wanting to preserve and conserve objects in natural stone and architects working at restoration projects. We are grateful for both their support and for the opportunity to present this special issue on natural stone.

Guest editors

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