

# Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers



## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2007 at the Loews Le Concorde Conference Centre, Quebec, Canada**

### **Present:**

Elaine Toote (Bahamas – Chair), Laura Millar (Canada), Penny Brook (United Kingdom), Margot Thomas (St Lucia), Setareki Tale (Fiji), Anne Thurston (International Records Management Trust), Helena Leonce (Trinidad and Tobago), Kholekile Mthethwa (Swaziland), Mandy Gilder (South Africa), Elizabeth Bahoum (The Gambia), Sina Ah Poe (Samoa), Norehan Jaaffar (Malaysia), Patrice Williams (Bahamas), Sharon Alexander-Gooding (Barbados), Peter Mlyansi (Tanzania), Jaafar Abdul Rahman (Malaysia), Lawrence Mwangi (Kenya), Chileshe Lusale-Masukuma (Zambia), Renato Augusto Pereira (Mozambique), Sonia Black (Jamaica), Karla Hayward (Bermuda), Roger Craig (Cayman Islands), Bryan Corbett (Canada), Kelebogile Kgabi (Botswana), Prince Abbas Khan (Pakistan) and Kelvin Smith (United Kingdom – Honorary Secretary).

### **1 Apologies for absence**

Received from Emmerson Bryan (Barbados), Olorukooba Sardauna (Nigeria) and Dianne McCaskill (New Zealand).

### **2 Minutes of the AGM 2006**

The minutes of the previous annual general meeting, held in Curacao on 25 November 2006, which had been circulated in advance, were approved.

### **3 Matters arising**

Kelvin Smith will be retiring as Honorary Secretary in the coming year. It had been hoped to bring his successor to Quebec as part of the succession planning. However, nominations for the post have not yet been put forward.

Elaine Toote also confirmed that she will be standing down as Chairperson at the next AGM in Kuala Lumpur.

### **4 Chair's Report for 2006/07**

Elaine Toote summarised the contents of her annual report, which had been circulated in advance.

Services to members continued to be high quality, enhanced this year by the re-design of the Association's website. This was largely the work of Shadrack Katuu and Peter Dennis from South Africa, to whom we are very grateful. It is now much more user-friendly but would benefit from more content. Members are encouraged to post items of interest to their Commonwealth colleagues.

It was unfortunate that the proposed legislation workshop in Tanzania had to be cancelled because of financial restraints. It was still hoped to hold the final workshop for this project on the African continent in early 2008.

The Association was very sad to learn of the deaths during the year of two distinguished former members of the Association – Jeffrey Ede (United Kingdom) and Elizabeth Williams (Jamaica). Both had made enormous contributions to archives and records management in the international arena.

The full report will be posted to the ACARM website.

### **5 Financial Statement 2006/07**

An income and expenditure summary (while the full accounts were being audited) was circulated to those present. This showed that the Association was in a healthy financial position although this was largely due to the cancellation of the African workshop on legislation. The finances were being well controlled even though there is always room for further support or sponsorship if it can be obtained. It may be possible to obtain further funding from the International Council on Archives (ICA) Programme Commission.

The Association is grateful to the Commonwealth Foundation for continuing financial support.

## 6 **Projects and Programme Report**

The Association's major project over the past few years – records and archives legislation, and the impact of other legislation on it – was now drawing to an end. A last workshop was planned for the African continent. It is hoped that this may now be held in Swaziland. The Honorary Secretary and the Swaziland Director of Archives, Kholekile Mthethwa, have been in correspondence to discuss preliminary requirements.

There was also some work on records and archives legislation being undertaken in Hong Kong and it was suggested that a workshop might also be held there.

*[Post meeting note: Although Hong Kong was no longer a member of the Commonwealth, a representative might be invited to the planned workshop]*

Further funding from the Commonwealth Foundation enabled the Association to produce a series of leaflets on records management. Copies of these were available to those present. They will be posted to the ACARM website and members are encouraged to download them and use them in their efforts to encourage good records management practices in their countries. They may be used, for example, on training courses and induction programmes.

The next big area for which the Association will be seeking support is that of electronic records management (ERM). This will feature as a major part of the submission to the Commonwealth Foundation in the coming year. In the meantime, as suggested at the last AGM, a survey of the current ERM situation in Commonwealth countries should be undertaken. The Honorary Secretary agreed to take this forward. It was suggested also that a workshop on the results of the survey and resulting proposals could be held at the next ICA Congress, to be held in Kuala Lumpur in July 2008. Laura Millar (Canada) thought that there might be scope for a joint event with something that she is planning.

In the longer term, as also mentioned at the last AGM, the Association should investigate the preservation of archives and the help that is needed by many countries.

## 7 **Website development**

As mentioned in the Chair's report, the Association's website was now vastly improved. Members are encouraged to populate it with articles, photographs and other material that might be of interest to their colleagues (such as *Memory of the World* information).

## 8 **Any other business**

**(a)** Procedures should soon be put in place for the nomination of Association officers in preparation for elections at the AGM in Kuala Lumpur in July next

year. The Honorary Secretary and Chair have already indicated that they will not be standing again. Subject to confirmation, the Honorary Treasurer (Effy Parparinou, Cyprus) has also indicated a wish to stand down.

In addition, two current Executive Committee members – Ian Wilson (Canada) and John Daramola (Nigeria) – have completed their eight year stint. The Association is grateful for their support over the years.

The Honorary Secretary will begin the process of asking for nominations for the vacant positions. Lawrence Mwangi (Kenya) has already nominated his compatriot, Agnetta Akhaabi, for one of the vacant Executive Committee positions.

**(b)** Roger Craig (Cayman Islands) asked whether any members knew what the latest developments were on the Blue Shield project (relating to disaster recovery and planning). Since there was no positive response, it was suggested that an article be included in the next Newsletter. Some colleagues (for example, from Fiji and Trinidad, could write about recent experiences of disasters).

**(c)** Setareki Tale (Fiji) asked whether the Association had nominated anyone for Commonwealth Fellowships recently. It seemed that the last nomination was in 2001. The Honorary Secretary will watch for the next round of nominations and circulate details to the membership.

**(d)** The Commonwealth Foundation has asked what impact the legislation workshops have had on participating countries. The Honorary Secretary will write to those who have participated in the Wellington and St Kitts events and ask for their views. In future it may be useful to provide participants with an evaluation form which they could complete and return after a specified time.

**(e)** Several members suggested that the Association should place a list of particular expertise on the website so that members could make contact when advice and guidance is required. A letter will be sent to members to see who are willing to put themselves forward.

## 9 **Date and place of next AGM**

The next annual general meeting will take place during the ICA Congress in Kuala Lumpur, 21 – 27 July 2008.