



International
Council on Archives

SPA - Section of Professional Associations

NEWSLETTER June 2011

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Welcome to the June 2011 edition of the SPA Newsletter. The purpose of the Newsletter is to keep SPA members up-to-date with news on Section activities and projects and to strengthen international cooperation and collaboration between professional records management and archival associations. The SPA Steering Committee wishes to thank Colleen McEwen for her excellent work as Newsletter Editor during the past years and wishes success to our new Editor, Claude Roberto.

SPA Steering Committee meeting, Haifa, Israel

The SPA Steering Committee met in Haifa, Israel between 21 and 23 March 2011 as guests of the Israel Archives and Information Association. Association representatives from France, Switzerland, Germany, the United Kingdom, Israel, the Netherlands, Mexico, Catalonia, the United States, Canada and Australia attended.

Topics on the agenda included final arrangements for the second SPA World Conference of Archives Associations that will be held in Edinburgh between 30 August and 2 September (more details in this Newsletter); how associations could publicise the Universal Declaration on Archives and how SPA might assist them; the latest draft of the handbook for developing a competency model; and a new SPA guideline on establishing an association awards scheme. A planning session was held to consider future directions and modes of operation of the Committee after the 2012 Congress; it covered the place of associations within the ICA, the benefits to associations from joining ICA and having a representative on the SPA Steering Committee, and how best to arrange Committee roles and responsibilities.

The trip to Israel included visits to the Haifa Municipal Archives, Jerusalem Municipal Archives, Yad Vashem, and the Ben Gurion Archives.

The SPA SC on the way to the Haifa Municipal Archives

Photo credit: Cristina Bianchi



Morning tea hosted by the Haifa Municipal Archives

Photo credit: Zvi Roger, Haifa city



2nd SPA World Conference of Archives Associations

The Second SPA World Conference of Archives Associations will be held in Edinburgh between 30 August and 2 September 2011. The event will be hosted by the Archives and Records Association (UK and Ireland) and will be a separate stream at their annual conference. The conference will provide a forum where representatives of professional archives and records management associations can discuss issues and common concerns and share experiences. Registration details are available from the front page of the Archives and Records Association website www.archives.org.uk ICA/SPA members are eligible to receive conference membership rates by quoting your ICA association membership number. If you are unsure of this number please contact Colleen McEwen, SPA Joint Secretary at tcmcewen@gmail.com Registration will also allow participant to attend the ARA sessions.

An Association Fair, where participating associations can display publications and other items developed for sale or general distribution, will be included in the program. The Fair will be held between 4 and 6 pm on 31 August. Each association will be given table space to use for displaying items; if you want book stands or easels or other display equipment, you must provide them. Space will be limited, so we suggest that you bring sample copies of items other than small “give away” materials. Participating associations are encouraged to have their representatives stay at the table during the Fair to answer questions and talk with interested colleagues.

If you would like to participate in the Fair, please contact either Claude Roberto at Claude.Roberto@gov.ab.ca or Michal Henkin at henkinzm@netvision.net.il by 29 July.

2011 SPA Annual General Meeting

This year the 2011 Annual General Meeting of SPA will be held in conjunction with the SPA Conference in Edinburgh on 2 September and *not* at the Toledo CITRA in late October. The business meeting will be preceded by presentations on the SPA Archival Solidarity Project, the SPA Manual and SPA website.

Proposed new SPA Guidelines

SPA guidelines are developed to assist associations deliver useful and effective services to members. To date 10 guidelines have been produced; they are available on the SPA website at <http://www.ica.org/746/professional-resources/spa-resources.html> Guidelines are available in English, French and Spanish and will form the online SPA Manual to be launched at the Edinburgh Conference in August/September this year.

Two more guidelines are currently under development, one on producing an association newsletter and the other on establishing an association award program to formally recognise members who have made a significant contribution to the association and/or the profession.

Universal Declaration on Archives

The Universal Declaration on Archives that was approved at the Oslo CITRA in September 2010 has now been translated into a number of languages available on the ICA website at <http://www.ica.org/6573/reference-documents/universal-declaration-on-archives.html>. Translations are coordinated by the ICA Secretariat; if you wish to translate the Declaration into a language not already available, please contact the ICA office first at secretariat@ica.org.

To assist associations in promoting the Declaration, SPA will develop a blank template for the UDA poster which members can use to download the translated Declaration into their own language and arrange local printing.

The Declaration may be considered at the 36th Session of UNESCO in October/November 2011. If the declaration is accepted for the UNESCO agenda, SPA will send an alert to all members, asking them to contact the UNESCO representative from their country.

ICA Working Group on Access Principles

In the spring of 2010 the ICA Committee on Best Practices and Standards asked a small group of archivists to discuss whether it was possible to develop a standard of good practice for public access to all archives, governmental and non-governmental. The people of the Working Group represented a variety of archival traditions: Sarah Choy, Hong Kong Legislative Council Archives, East Asian Regional Branch; Victoras Domarkas, former director of the national archives of Lithuania, European Regional Branch (EURBICA); Chido Houbraken, Netherlands, records management consultant, EURBICA; Silvia Ninita de Moura Esteveao, national archives of Brazil, Association of Latin American Archivists; Helene Servant, Service interministeriel des archives de France, EURBICA; Maggie Shapley, Australia, University Archivist, Australian National University, Section on University Archives and Research Institutions (SUV); Trudy Huskamp Peterson, United States, Section of Professional Associations (SPA), chaired the group. All members served on the Working Group in their individual expert capacities, not as representatives of their workplaces. The group decided that it was both important and possible to develop a statement of principles about access to archives. The Group decided that this would be a professional statement not an ISO standard, that it would not attempt to define terms but rather to use already existing definitions, and that it would cover access to archives but not to current records.

Following a meeting in Paris in May 2010, the members of the group drafted two major documents: a statement of principles of access to archives and a technical report providing advice on implementing the principles. With these documents in hand, the Working Group invited the chairs of ICA bodies whose members were not represented on the Working Group and whose work often encounters access issues to name a member read the draft, comment on it, and come to a consultative meeting about the principles in Paris in February 2011. The results were a Consultative Group that included Didier Bondue representing the Section for Business and Labour Archives, Fatoumatta Cisse of the West African Regional Branch, Kim Eberhard of the Section of Archives of Churches and Religious Denominations; Soufi Fouad of the Arab Regional Branch, Deborah Jenkins of the Section of Local, Municipal and Territorial Archives, Jan Lohman of the Section of International Organizations, Ivan Murambiwa of Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch, Gunther Schefbeck of the Section for Archives of Parliaments and Political Parties, and David Sutton of the Section on Literary and Artistic Archives. The Consultative Group agreed that ICA should adopt a set of access principles and made numerous suggestions about the text of the two principal documents.

The Working Group then redrafted the two documents, circulated them to the Consultative Group, and again edited the documents. The revised statement, *Principles of Access to Archives*, along with a plan and timeline for general debate on it, was considered by the ICA Executive Board at its meeting in March. The Executive Board commented on the Principles, and some redrafting was again done. The Board adopted the plan and timeline for consultation; because access is a major concern of user groups, the plan includes a commitment to share the draft with user groups and allied organizations and ask for their comments.

The *Principles of Access to Archives* consists of 10 principles with a commentary explaining each principle; the principles and the commentary taken together constitute the statement of professional practice. (This follows the format of the ICA *Code of Ethics*.) The *Principles* are accompanied by a brief glossary and the technical report.

The timeline and plan for consultation is:

- 2011 June Draft completed, translated, and sent to ICA membership and stakeholders; comment period opens
- 2011 September Second World Conference of Archives Associations, workshop
- 2011 October CITRA, open forum on the draft
- 2012 February Comment period closes, revisions completed, published, sent to Executive Board
- 2012 April Executive Board considers draft
- 2012 August General Assembly considers the statement of principles

ICA and SPA urge all archival associations to discuss the draft *Principles* during their meetings between now and February 2012 and send their comments to the ICA. The ICA would be grateful for any guidance on user groups and other groups that might be asked to comment; please send suggestions to ica@ica.org.

The archivists who have worked on the draft have found it challenging to encompass the variety of practices in a single document, but they all believe it is an important initiative for ICA. ICA welcomes vigorous debate about the draft, because spirited participation will make the final document a robust statement of practice that all archivists will respect. While the actions the *Principles* require will be aspirational for some archives, the Working Group believes they are a realistic standard for governmental and non-governmental archives alike. Please join in the discussion.

ICA Photographic and Audiovisual Archives Group (PAAG)

The Photographic and Audiovisual Archives Group (PAAG) was created in an attempt to advance the role and projection of the ICA in relation to photographic and audiovisual heritage. The mission of the PAAG is to develop general guidelines and tools for archivists working with photographic and audiovisual collections, to promote activities and educational resources, and to create a virtual space to support professional communications and the distribution of resources.

There are currently 8 members of the PAAG representing Uruguay, Brazil, South Africa, the United States, New Zealand and Spain, all of whom are specialists in the treatment of photographic and audiovisual records. The members of the Group expect to form networks in their own countries to promote the work of PAAG.

One goal of the PAAG is to establish a web page on the ICA site. The site will include a summary of the aims and goals of the Group, links to resources, information about available training, details about the members of the Group and contact details.

A pilot project is to develop a Survival Kit that will provide a basic set of resources for archivists facing the challenge of dealing with and organizing photographic and audiovisual material. The main aim is to provide support to archivists who are not audiovisual specialists when they face the responsibility of dealing with records. The Survival Kit will be completed in 2011, and the Group has plans to initiate additional projects that will be useful to the archival community.

News from member associations

Association des archivistes du Quebec (AAQ) – The Association represents archivists in Quebec and French Canada and is currently responsible for administering the umbrella group, the Bureau of Canadian Archivists (BCA).

The annual conference of the Association was held in Alma, in the Province of Quebec, between 1 and 3 June 2011 with the theme *40 years, a new face*. The Conference attracted archivists from the international francophone community and sessions covered areas of interest to professionals working in archives and records management. There were workshops on the challenges of copyright, digitization of records, the conservation of architectural drawings and on free records management software. There was also a presentation on the development of conservation policies for digitized records.

At the international level there was a presentation by the Director General of the Archives nationales d'Haiti, who gave an overview of the international help received after the 2010 earthquake and a progress report on work undertaken to repair the damaged archival buildings and restore the records. His address described the emergency arrangements put in place to deal with the enormous loss of records caused by the catastrophic earthquake.

At the Conference M. Gerard Ernisse was awarded honorary membership of the AAQ. The award was made to the retired Director of the Centre historique des Archives nationales de France for his contribution to the development and promotion of archival sciences and his support for archival associations, such as the AAQ, at the international level. This was the first time this award had been granted by the Association.

Australian Society of Archivists – The Australian Society of Archivists has launched a new social networking site replacing the aus-archivist listserv. The site is called **ArchivesLive!** and aims to promote and facilitate communications across the archives and records sector. The site has a *Forum* where debate and discussion can occur between members, a *Blog* for posting alerts or news snippets and a *Listings* area where job advertisements can be placed. There is also a *Group* area where members interested in particular areas of interest (e.g. electronic records, Indigenous issues, religious archives) can form discussion groups. There are currently over 700 subscribers to the site, which is open to everyone interested in archival matters. To access **ArchivesLive!** go to <http://archiveslive.ning.com>

The New South Wales Branch of the Australian Society of Archivists organised a forum entitled 'After WikiLeaks, is it all over for The Archives?' A podcast is available at http://recordkeepingroundtable.org/2011/03/28/after_wikileaks/

13th Congress of Catalan Archivists – The Scientific Committee of the 13th Congress of Catalan Archivists, under the name 'Archivists, should we reinvent ourselves?' gathered more than 200 archival science and records management professionals in the town of Lloret de Mar from 5 to 7 May. Speakers came from the University of Girona, the National Archives of France, the Terrassa Historical Archives in Catalonia, the American National Archives and Records Administration, the L'Alt Urgell Regional Archives in Catalonia and the Government of Catalonia.

The Scientific Committee decided to expand the field of archival science at university level and to take advantage of the opportunities and possibilities offered by social networks; the Committee also agreed to support the ICA model of professional competencies and functions and to ensure that the government agency responsible for the archival policy of Catalonia maintains and develops the structures and bodies necessary to guarantee the correct development of archival science and records management. Scientific Committee members were Joan Boadas, Lluís Cermeno, Josep Conejo, Joaquim Daban, Patrícia Lloveras, Joaquim Nolla, Julio Quilez, M. Luz Retuerta, Joan Soler, Xavier Tarraubella, Blanca Verdaguer.

Sociedad para el Desarrollo Científico de la Archivística – Gabriela Salazar reported that Federal Archival Legislation, which has been approved by the Federal Chamber of Representatives, will be presented to the plenary session of the Mexican Senate by November. This culminates a long campaign carried out by the Sociedad para el Desarrollo Científico de la Archivística and other Mexican Archival associations and institutions, and professional archivists from the Escuela Nacional de Biblioteconomía y Archivonomía. The working group was coordinated by Maria Teresa Dorantes, President of Archiveros sin Fronteras México.

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