

Annual Report, 2008

Council for Museum Anthropology

Minutes of the 2008 Board Meeting of the Council for Museum Anthropology

On November 19, 2008, President Catherine Fowler convened the annual Board meeting of the Council for Museum Anthropology (CMA) during the American Anthropological Association (AAA) meeting in San Francisco, CA. Present were Catherine Fowler (President), Alex Barker (Vice-President), Nancy Rosoff (Treasurer), Board Members Candace Greene, Kim Christen, and Yoshiko Yamamoto, and ex-officio Board Member Jason Baird Jackson, Editor of *Museum Anthropology* (MA). Also attending were incoming Treasurer Gwyneira Isaac and incoming Board Members Joshua Bell and Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, as well as future MA co-editor and ex-officio member Steve Nash. Absent were Joyce Herold (Secretary), Cecile Ganteaume, and Daniel Swan.

After introductions of incoming board members, Kay Fowler thanked departing board members for their service.

Secretary's report, by Candace Greene on behalf of Joyce Herold:

- minutes of the last board meeting as prepared by the Secretaries were distributed and approved with one correction to the acronym of Blue Shield.
- a report was circulated summarizing content of the regular CMA column in Anthropology News over the past year; suggestions for future issues was invited

President's report, by Kay Fowler:

- Fowler noted that CMA was invited to provide input toward AAA's comment regarding proposed changes in NAGPRA regulations, and that CMA's response was incorporated within that document.
- a critical task during the year was recruitment and selection of a new editor for the journal *Museum Anthropology*. Steve Nash and Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, both of the Denver Museum of Science and Nature, were selected to serve as co-editors; CMA will be signing a formal agreement with their institution and the transition in editorship will take place this summer
- during the year, a dispute arose regarding a journal article that appeared a few years ago; the president assembled a committee to investigate the complaint with the result that both the disputant and the author of the article were invited to publish responses in a future issue of the journal, which will appear together with a statement of concern by the editor. There was discussion of the process, which was new to CMA and called for new procedures, which were developed in conjunction with the AAA publication office.
- it was noted that a new interest group COPAPIA (**Committee on xx**) had contacted CMA seeking to identify issues of common interest
- work with the new publisher Wiley-Blackwell seems to be going smoothly, and they have asked for suggestions for changes in the journal. The AAA formula for allocation of revenue has recently been reviewed and revised, and CMA anticipates an improved revenue stream.

- Fowler reported on business from the Section Assembly. AAA has revised their requirement for section status from 250 members to 225, accepting at least one below that – Indigenous Anthropologists. CMA is well over the minimum number. The Assembly is concerned to ensure that section records are archived, and Fowler informed them of the COPAR initiative and that NAA is the official repository of AAA records. CMA records prior to 2000 have been archived, but more recent files may not have been. Past officers were encouraged to deposit those materials with NAA. Other Assembly business had to do with planned revisions of the AAA Code of Ethics, on which section input will be sought. Alex Barker serves on that committee and will be our point person.

Treasurer's Report, by Nancy Rossoff:

- after recent years of financial crisis generated by the costs of journal publication, CMA is now operating at a modest surplus. This is due to two factors: Indiana University's support of the editorial office, and the new publishing agreement with Wiley-Blackwell. Membership is stable from the previous year.

Editor's Report, by Jason Jackson:

- the journal *Museum Anthropology* is in good condition with new editors selected. They will inherit sufficient accepted material to allow production to move forward smoothly while leaving room for them to shape the content.

- the acceptance rate for *MA* is now very competitive, at a rate that Jackson sees as appropriate to serve the field

- *Museum Anthropology Review*, a parallel peer-reviewed electronic publication, is thriving, enabling us to accommodate additional content. Jackson will continue to edit this publication endeavor, which is endorsed by CMA but is not an official AAA publication. The Indiana University Library is the official publisher.

- the next issue of *MA* will include documents relating to the content dispute referenced above, which are moving forward in a positive spirit of resolution. Jackson expressed some worry over invoking a new mechanism, the "Expression of Concern."

Fowler expressed CMA's warm appreciation to Jackson for stewarding the journal over the past years, and for setting up a new organizational process for review and throughput of articles.

Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Nash expressed their desire for input from CMA board members on future directions for the journal, including specific suggestions of topics. They noted that 2010 will be the 20th anniversary of the passage of NAGPRA and it seemed appropriate to center an issue around that theme. Another topic proposed was exploration of how we measure success in museum anthropology.

Vice-president's Report, by Alex Barker:

- CMA was highly visible at this year's conference, with significant presence beyond the 2 sessions we are formally allocated for sponsorship as sessions reviewed by CMA appear with such credit in the printed program.

Greene noted that the CMA column in *Anthropology News* was another venue to showcase CMA's interests, and that suggestions were invited, including development of an overall plan for the year of topics to cover.

Old business:

Candace Greene reported on the status of the Summer Institute in Museum Anthropology, a proposed training program at the Smithsonian being developed with endorsement by CMA. NSF supported a planning workshop and a proposal for implementation is currently pending with NSF. If funded, the program will begin in summer 2009. An article describing the program and recruiting applications will appear in the January issue of *Anthropology News*.

Jason Jackson reported that Dan Swan is now the CMA webmaster and is working with AAA, which has taken on the responsibility for hosting section websites. This will avoid past problems of relocating the website frequently due to changes in officers.

Fowler noted that several positions will be open for election: President, Secretary, and 2 board members. Joshua Bell and Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh volunteered to serve as a nominations committee. January 31 is the deadline for nominations to be submitted to the AAA, complete with statements by each candidate.

Fowler noted that the CMA by-laws as well as the operating handbook need to be reviewed and perhaps revised. She encouraged all board members to review these.

Gwyneira Isaac raised the issue of membership, particularly how CMA can reach out to a wider audience. The history of interaction with AAM was discussed and the decline in curatorial participation in that organization noted. Some interaction with the Museum Ethnographers Group was discussed, although formal membership interchange seemed unlikely.

Joshua Bell invited exploration of initiating some higher profile activities such as an award for a book or journal article. Discussion moved to other activities that might be possible now that our finances are in good shape, including suggestions of a student paper prize, student travel awards for participation, or a conference separate from AAA.

Submitted by Candace Greene,
In behalf of Joyce Herold, Secretary