

The Academy Grows Up: A Few Observations On The Brink of Recertification

by Elizabeth W. Adkins

(Remarks by the incoming ACA president at the annual business meeting of the Academy of Certified Archivists, August 31, 1995)

It's been a year of tremendous change for the Academy. We've financially restructured the organization and implemented dues. The board has agreed to end its current relationships with SAA as our secretariat and Professional Education Service as our testing service, by consolidating both services under a single entity, Capitol Hill Management Services. Next year we'll begin the process of recertification -- and ACA will begin to move from childhood to adolescence.

Ours has been a highly atypical childhood. Most archival associations start with an idea -- to get a group of archivists together and talk shop. Typically the first meeting is small and informal, and as the group grows in size and scope, a structure slowly evolves. Dues are instituted, officers are elected, by-laws are drafted and formal meeting schedules are prepared. The organization creates a newsletter, and sometimes it publishes a scholarly journal. After a while, committees and task forces are formed to initiate ambitious new projects, or to bring together archivists with common interests. The organization takes on a life of its own, and a more intricate structure. Even SAA started this way, taking many years to reach its current status as the oldest and largest professional archival association in North America.

We, on the other hand, did not have the luxury of starting slowly and evolving. Before our first annual meeting, our founders had to process nearly 700 applications for certification by petition, develop the first examination, find financing to pay for the professional development and administration of the exam, establish an administrative structure for

the organization, and organize an election of officers.

We hit the ground running, and ever since, we've had to make up the rules as we went along. As recertification looms closer, we are once again facing some unknowns. How many of our members will recertify? Will the new financial structure support the administrative costs of recertification? How can we encourage employers to hire certified archivists? What forms and procedures will we put in place to administer recertification?

As we deal with these questions, we move away from an almost single-minded focus on the certification exam. Whereas previously most of the board's attentions were occupied with preparing, improving and promoting the exam, we are now focusing on advocating the CA credential and communicating with our existing members.

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The Academy Grows Up

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And here we are at a disadvantage: unlike most archival associations, we don't have a program of sessions and workshops at our annual meeting, and most of our members do not feel a sense of participation in the organization, beyond obtaining the CA credential. And while we are lucky to have a group of strong archival leaders with many years of experience, most of our new members are just entering the profession, and not all of them come to the SAA meeting. In fact, about 30% of our members are not SAA members. That means that we know almost nothing about -- and have few opportunities to get acquainted with --- a substantial group of our members.

We have started a few initiatives that should help. We've used the newsletter to solicit input to our strategic plans and priorities. On our dues notices, we've included a form to solicit volunteers for elected posts and appointed committees. And we've moved the ACA annual meeting from its traditional 7:00 AM breakfast meeting time slot, which often ran into conflicts with scheduled SAA sessions, to an evening meeting followed by an opportunity to enjoy each other's company at a cash bar.

The Outreach Committee is also considering ways of expanding ACA's contacts with its members. Should we form local ACA chapters? How can we make better use of the newsletter to communicate both the details of certification maintenance procedures and the benefits of certification? How can we get the regionals to sponsor sessions and workshops on certification? The committee is just starting to answer these questions, and I expect that some excellent ideas will come out of its discussions.

As ACA continues to mature, we need to become more sophisticated in our approach to advocacy of the credential as well as communication and interaction with our own members. The ACA will be what we make it, so I would urge you to take some time this evening to share with your elected representatives your ideas, dreams and hopes for the organization. Let us know how you think ACA should address its priorities -- keeping in mind, of course, the realities of scarce funding and the

limitations of an all-volunteer organization. I assure you that we will be listening carefully.

[NOTE: Of course, we welcome additional input from members who were not able to attend the annual business meeting. Please call or write ACA regents and officers with your concerns and comments.]

Archival Education and ACA

by Mary Elizabeth Ruwell

A fair amount of members have voiced concerns about ACA's relation to professional education efforts. Some of these suggestions have included:

- establishing relationships with undergraduate history departments
- working with the Society of American Archivists to develop some education programs
- helping students to select programs which will best prepare them to enter the marketplace and/or certifying archival education programs.

The ACA has already addressed many questions that relate to professional education and established programs. The role delineation and questions developed for the certification were done with much input from archival educators, existing literature, and other professional sources. ACA's focus on the excellence of the examination for the profession has been crucial and it has succeeded in gaining the acceptance of the validity of the exam among professional members. The ACA has also allowed a provisional membership for students of M.A. programs who can take the exam without a year of experience.

ACA has established a Task Force on Workshop Programs chaired by Megan Sniffen-Marinoff. Among the preliminary comments made by the members were unanimous sentiments not to have ACA give workshops since this duplicated other efforts, but perhaps to consider producing some kind of study guide. As this year's ACA liaison with educators, I would like to have the ACA consider the suggests you have made to get more involved with archival education, but I would very much like your help in going about this. My e-mail address is 102504.2742@compuserve.com and my telephone number is (719) 598-7820.

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1995 ACA Election Results

Five new officers were elected at the ACA elections prior to the annual meeting. They include:

Vice-Pres/President Elect: Mary Elizabeth Ruwell
Treasurer: Donna Wells
Secretary: Jackie Esposito
Regent for Exam Administration: Fred Stielow
Regent for Certification Maintenance: Willow Powers

Also elected was a new member of the Nominating Committee: Katherine Hamilton-Smith
Institutional affiliations, addresses, and phone number of the new officers and regents are included in the listings on this page. The new officers assumed office immediately following the annual business meeting in Washington DC.

Regent for Certification Maintenance:

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Regent for Examination Administration:

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Bowie, MD 20715
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ACA Treasurer's Report

July 1, 1994 - June 30, 1995

The Treasurer's Report below provides a snapshot of the receipts and disbursements during the Academy's fiscal year, 1994-1995. Expenses outran income by nearly \$10,000. However, actual income was more than \$2,500 above what was anticipated in the approved 1994-1995 budget; and expenditures were more than \$14,000 less than expected. Much of this latter figure was the result of expenses borne by institutions of the officers and regents for travel and services normally handled by our secretariat. We have completed a successful audit for the 1994-1995 fiscal year, and income tax forms for the calendar year 1994 have been filed.

Income will increase and stabilize once the dues structure is fully in place.

I. Current Assets as of June 30

Bank One Checking	35,006.54
Bank One Savings	10,657.15
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	45,663.69

II. Receipts FY 95/95

Interest Payments:	
Bank One Checking	75.95
Bank One Savings	744.67
Bank One CD	1,333.04
Membership Dues	4,150.00
Certification Fees:	
Applications	1,850.00
Certification	7,625.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	15,778.60

III. Disbursements FY 94/95

Audit	2,100.00
Bank Charges	56.00
Insurance	867.00
Legal	141.25
Office Supplies	91.90
PES	6,084.00
PES Exam Development	5,400.00
Postage	246.06
Printing, brochures (Photocopies)	25.00
Proctors	480.00
SAA	6,618.98
Travel, Exam Committee	1,663.42
Travel, Mid-Year Board	1,826.89
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	25,600.50

New ACA Secretariat

The Academy of Certified Archivists has moved its secretariat to the association management firm of Capitol Hill Management Services, Inc. (CHMS) of Albany, NY. CHMS will take over the tasks formerly contracted through the Society of American Archivists (SAA).

CHMS will also assume the testing services functions formerly performed by Professional Educational Service (PES). The transition to CHMS will be complete prior to the 1996 examination.

The decision to select a new secretariat and combine it with the testing service was made in order to maintain the highest quality service to the membership while keeping the costs as low as possible.

SAA served ACA well, but with the additional demands of administering dues payments and certification maintenance applications, they are no longer able to provide the level of service required.

CHMS is sensitive to the needs of an association of archivists. It provides association management services to the National Association of Government Archivists and Records Administrators.

The ACA Newsletter is published three times a year by the Academy of Certified Archivists, Inc. Founded in 1989, the Academy is an independent, non-profit organization for certifying professional archivists. Direct all inquiries and correspondence to:

ACA Secretariat
Capitol Hill Management Services, Inc.
48 Howard Street
Albany, NY 12207
(518) 463-8644
Fax (518) 463-8656

Meeting Members Needs: An Informal Survey

by David Haury
ACA Outreach Committee

The Academy of Certified Archivists (ACA) recently asked its members to indicate their requests or concerns for the organization. New members provided insights into why they chose to take the certification examination and become certified archivists. The overwhelming focus of the members' interest in ACA and its future development related to the professionalization of archivists. Their expectations are manifested in two general areas: employment and education.

Several ACA members reported progress in encouraging employers to list certification as a preference in hiring decisions. Others indicated that their employer encouraged staff to become certified and that certification was becoming a factor in promotions. While expectations that certification will become mandatory in filling many archival positions have not been met, respondents were generally pleased with the rate of progress. ACA's recently published "Employer's Guide" should provide additional information and encouragement for employers to recognize the value of certification.

In several instances academy membership has provided credentials to archivists who previously found the door to the profession blocked. For example, there are archivists who have educational backgrounds, not in library science or history, but in fields such as management or education. Even after obtaining several years of experience and attending professional meetings and workshops, they found their advancement and job mobility blocked by the lack of an MLS or MA in history. Now ACA membership has given them the professional credentials they formerly lacked. As employers become increasingly aware of the academy, the value of being a member of ACA will increase.

ACA members also gave high marks to their organization for its educational efforts. In addition to the task of educating employers about the value of certification, the ACA also fosters communication among its members, who were pleased with the ACA's meetings, newsletter, and other publications. Sessions promoting and explaining the goals of ACA have been presented at regional archival meetings. A new ACA membership listing will be printed next

spring. A suggestion that the ACA create a home page on the World Wide Web is being actively pursued as another avenue for communication.

The ACA also formed a Task Force on Workshop Programs to study recommendations that the ACA begin to offer its own educational programs. The task force has not concluded its work. Its preliminary recommendation is that the role of the ACA in providing continuing education courses or in working with groups such as the Society of American Archivists to implement workshops should be limited at this time. The task force believes such efforts would duplicate the many fine efforts undertaken through other organizations. The ACA will continue to work with other archival organizations, and, as its recertification requirements imply, the ACA highly values continuing education and professional involvement. Nevertheless, the focus in the short term will be on educating employers, providing professional credentials, and promoting recertification.

As the ACA enters its critical recertification process, it continues to seek advice from its members regarding its role and programs. Those with additional comments may contact the chair of the ACA Outreach Committee, Nicholas C. Burckel, Director of Libraries, Marquette, PO Box 3141, Milwaukee, WI 53201-3141. Phone: 414-288-7214. E-mail: burckeln@vms.csd.mu.edu

Employer's Brochure Printed

The ACA Outreach Committee has completed work on a brochure aimed at employers discussing the advantages of certification. It encourages employers to hire certified archivists and to establish certification as a criterion for promotion.

5000 copies of the Employer's Guide have been printed. Prior to January 1, 1996, the brochure and a cover letter from ACA President Elizabeth Adkins will be mailed to a number of employers of archivists, including libraries, government archives, and other groups.

Leon Miller of Tulane University was instrumental in the writing and production of the brochure.

ACA Q&A: Your Queries Answered

For the classes of 1989 and 1990, the recent dues mailing provided an opportunity to respond to the following question: "What services/products would you like to see the ACA board offer its members? Do you have any other requests or concerns?" We were grateful to see a fairly large number of our members respond with questions, ideas and issues. While we will not be able to answer all of your questions personally, we will start answering a few of them publicly through this newsletter column. Those members who did not receive a dues notice are welcome to submit additional questions or comments to ACA's secretary, Jackie Esposito, 1659 Circleville Road, State College, PA 16803; or you can fax her at (814) 863-5318. The next issue of the ACA Newsletter will contain additional questions and answers.

Q. As SAA's Chair of the Visual Materials Section and later as the VM Sections liaison to the Academy of Certified Archivists, we were not very impressed with ACA's lack of response to our efforts to ensure that the certification examination would be sure to include sufficient questions about the management of visual materials. Several examinees informed us that there were very few questions pertaining to visual materials. The general impression received was that ACA did not wish to be bothered about this issue.

A. Your question about coverage in the exam comes at a good time, because we will be constructing a new exam next spring. At that time, we will do a critical review of the draft prepared by our certification management firm and we will assess whether there are enough questions on visual materials. Please keep in mind, however, that our primary review for balance relates to the proper weighting of the domains, tasks and knowledge statements described in the Role Delineation document. We do not usually count or try to balance questions relating to particular formats. Nevertheless, we did produce more questions for our item bank this year on electronic formats, because we felt that format had been underrepresented. Could you nominate one member

of your section to write questions on visual materials for our item bank? If we have more questions on this topic in the item bank, it is more likely to be covered well in the exam.

Q. I am interested in information regarding ACA's association with other certification bodies, as well as methods of getting on mailing lists targeted to individuals with certification in professional fields.

A. ACA's association with other certification bodies has come primarily in the form of informal exchanges. We have exchanged information on our certification procedures with the International Certified Records Managers (ICRM) and other certifying organizations. The Task Force on Certification Maintenance gathered a great deal of information from other certifying bodies on recertification procedures. For the past year, we have subscribed to a newsletter issued by the National Certification Commission. These exchanges have been helpful, and we will explore ways to formalize our relationships, particularly with ICRM. Perhaps at that point we can find out if other certification organizations know of mailing lists targeted to individuals who are certified in various professional fields.

Q. I would like to see the ACA take a role in translating the credential into higher recognition of what archivists do and to increase pay and authority for us as professionals, rather than merely administer tests, certificates, and dues.

A. You have hit at the heart of an ultimate challenge to ACA's leadership. We will probably not be able to live up to the entire challenge -- in particular that of increasing pay and authority. However, we do intend to take steps to translate the credential into higher recognition of the professional credentials of archivists. It won't be easy, and we'll need the help of our entire membership. Ask yourself whether you have communicated your certification status to your management, and explained why you think certification is important. Do you use the C.A. designation on your business

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Q&A: Your Questions Answered

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cards and correspondence? If you are in a management position, have you included certification as a required or preferred credential in job descriptions? These simple steps will form a grass-roots basis on which the ACA can build further efforts. In fact, we would like to gather success stories, or examples of how certification has made a positive impact on you and your career, which we can share with others (especially employers). Please send your thoughts and stories to Outreach Committee member David A. Haury, Assistant Director, Kansas State Historical Society, 6425 SW 6th Avenue, Topeka, KS 66615-1099. His e-mail is: histsoc@acc.wuacc.edu.

Certified Archivist, Emeritus Membership Category Established

On the recommendation of the Committee on Certification Maintenance and the Finance Committee, the Board endorsed the following Resolution which was approved by the membership at the 1995 ACA Business Meeting on August 31.

Be it Resolved that the Academy of Certified Archivists does Hereby:

1. Create a category of Emeritus Member, to be designated as CA, Emeritus. ACA members retired from full-time archival employment may apply for emeritus status by forwarding to the ACA Secretariat a letter stating that they have retired from archival employment. The Secretariat will transfer the member to the emeritus category, maintaining a file of the requests to document the change in membership status.
2. Institute an Emeritus Membership dues category, which will carry an annual \$10.00 dues payment.
3. After the ACA Secretariat has transferred a member from regular to emeritus status, no further action will be necessary to maintain emeritus membership. Emeritus members will not need to be recertified, and members in this category may use the designation "Certified Archivist, Emeritus" contingent upon their payment of annual dues for the category.

Certified Archivist Classes of 1989 and 1990 Have You Paid Your Dues?

The implementation of a dues structure by ACA was necessary to ensure that the Academy meets the future needs of its membership on sound financial footing. Dues are just \$50 per year and are important to the well being of the Academy.

Dues are being introduced in steps. Notices have been sent only to those archivists who were certified in 1989 and 1990. Next year's notices will include the 1991 cohort; each year a new class will be added until all members are included in the dues structure. The dues structure means that the Academy will not need to charge a recertification fee.

If you have received a dues notice and have not yet paid, please remit your dues as soon as possible so that the Academy can carry on its important work.

Where Are These ACA Members? Moved/Forwarding Order Expired

Can you help us locate any of the following ACA members? Recent mailings to these members were returned, and we don't know their current addresses. Please contact the ACA Secretariat at (518) 463-8644 (fax: 518-463-8656, Attn: Steve Grandin) with any updates.

William E. Cox
Donald L. Haggerty
Clifton H. Jones
Kevin J. Logan
Dorothy S. Provine
William C. Wright

Jack T. Ericson
James M. Jean
Linda L. Leavens
Sally M. Marks
Ingrid P. Shields

Highlights of the ACA Board Meeting and Business Meeting

The ACA Board held its 1995 fall meeting in Washington DC on August 29. Highlights of the meeting are printed below. More detailed articles about agenda items can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

- Heard report on the transition of the ACA Secretariat from the Society of American Archivists to Capitol Hill Management Service (CHMS), an association management firm in Albany, NY. CHMS will also serve as the new testing service. (See page 4)
- Treasurer noted that Board members' institutions provided \$11,593 in indirect support to the Academy through travel subsidy, telephone service, photocopying, and release time. The actual figure is somewhat greater since the reporting was voluntary.
- Treasurer reported that 1994-95 receipts were \$15,778; disbursements were \$25,600. (See page 4)
- It was announced that the employer's brochure is now available. (See page 5)
- The Outreach Committee will survey a selected list of members who have not paid their dues to determine the reasons behind the decision.

- Agreed to look at the possibility of establishing an ACA World Wide Web site.
- Approved for submission to the membership a resolution creating an emeritus membership category. (See page 7)
- Agreed to revisit at a future meeting the issue of the Bachelor degree as a qualifying requirement.

The 1995 annual ACA Business Meeting was held in Washington DC on August 31. Approximately 120 members were present.

- The chair of the nominating committee announced the winners of the 1995 ACA election. (See page 3)
- The membership approved the new membership category of Emeritus.
- Heard report on revisions to the Role Delineation Document including adjustments to the weights assigned to domains, writing of 30 new questions, integration of electronic records references, and reorganization of the management domain.

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