



ACA News

Newsletter of the Academy of Certified Archivists

Issue 52 Winter 2006

ACA Forms Outreach Taskforce

Calling on the ACA to reach “beyond our members and candidates to groups of practitioners who have only a vague notion of what we are about and the advantages that certification can provide,” ACA President Michael Holland announced plans at the ACA’s annual meeting last August to form a new outreach task force.

Unlike the ACA’s usual outreach efforts—which are geared to a more general audience—the task force would focus on two specific groups. As Holland later explained, “I see the most fertile field [for expansion of the ACA’s membership] to be new archivists and archives students as they will be the fiscal as well as the organizational strength of the ACA in the future. It is only slightly less important to find productive ways to promote archival certifica-

tion to administrative archivists and organizations or companies that hire archivists. We have never had an effective approach to these groups and they are the key to convincing newer archivists to pay their application fees and sit for the ACA exam.”

The task force is chaired by Judith Cetina, former Regent for Certification Maintenance, who will work with Laura McLemore, Regent for Outreach. Cindy Smolovik, ACA Vice President serves in an ex officio capacity. Seven others serve on the committee, all of whom were chosen from individuals who responded to a call for volunteers last September.

“There was a tremendous response,” reported Cetina, “from archivists to be part of this effort to reach out to those who

are now in graduate school as well as those who perhaps have had their jobs less than five, perhaps less than ten years, who are just getting started in the profession. And there may be many people who are simply not aware of the ACA and the importance of the ACA credential.”

By January, task force members had communicated with each other numerous times and drafted goals. Now that the group has established its goals, the task force is developing objectives and action steps for each goal. They hope to have a preliminary report ready for review by April. Under President Holland’s original charge, a final report is due to the Board by May 31st. □



From the President

Michael E. Holland

ACA President 2005-2006

It seems incredible that only a few days after most of us departed the Society of American Archivists and the Academy of Certified Archivists annual meeting in New Orleans that much of what we had enjoyed and were entertained by was swept away. In a matter of hours one of the truly great cities of North America was carried back in time to a period when life was very hard and the town much smaller. Perhaps it was due to our recent pleasant experiences with New Orleans and its people or perhaps because New Orleans is among the most historically conscious and culturally aware of American cities, that these events have struck those of us in the archival community so profoundly. Similarly, it can not be overstated that any event which damages New Orleans is potentially damaging to the Academy as it was and is home to one of the largest certified archival communities in the nation and this community was historically an early and steadfast supporter of archival certification.

I am very proud of how the Academy stepped up to provide help in the early stages

of the disaster. The ACA, primarily through generous donations from several present and past board members, was able to contribute to the disaster relief fund started by the Society of Southwest Archivists and the Society of American Archivists. While we could not sponsor our own relief fund due to the incorporation status of the ACA, we were able to contribute meaningfully. The board also agreed that we should help Gulf Coast members by absolving them of the burden of paying annual membership dues for a period of time as well as lengthening the period allowed for recertification by petition because of the loss of professional development records and the loss of travel and professional development opportunities available to archivists in the stricken areas.

I have asked some of our colleagues living and working in the path of the twin hurricanes and others who have been very involved in the relief efforts to work with me to investigate if we can render additional aid in different forms to our colleagues on the Gulf Coast. I hope to have some thoughts on this

in the next *ACA Newsletter* and on the ACA Website in the next several months.

I would also like to report on the progress of an initiative that I feel is among the most important to be addressed by the Academy in some time. Judith Cetina, former Regent for Certification Maintenance, under the direction of current Regent for Outreach, Laura McLemore, is heading a taskforce to investigate strategies to bring more early-career professionals into the Academy and determine ways to advance recognition and appreciation of the CA credential among those who employ archivists. Judy and the seven members of the taskforce have been busy defining their priorities and preparing to craft a strategic plan for implementation by future Academy officers and regents. I have every confidence that this very able taskforce working with tested leadership will supply us with a plan that will help us to continue to grow and develop into the next decade.

Lastly, I would like to speak very briefly about something that has troubled me and

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ICA in Financial Crisis: A Report on the Abu Dhabi Conference

Late in November in Abu Dhabi, the capitol of the oil-rich United Arab Emirates, the annual business meeting of the International Council on Archives (ICA) talked, perhaps fittingly, mostly about money. A document distributed by ICA before the meeting was headed "ICA is in a financial crisis."

It informed the members that ICA was immediately stopping the 2005 print version of "Comma," the ICA's magazine, and that one staff member had departed, leaving only four persons in the ICA office.

This alarming document was supplemented by a report on revenue produced by a task force that includes ACA members Maygene Daniels, Tom Hickerson, and Tom Connors, as well as ARMA president Cheryl Pederson. The task force made a series of suggestions, including a revision of the dues structure. At the end of a grueling discussion, the delegates in Abu Dhabi agreed that the task force should continue its work but that no new dues scale would be adopted at this meeting. The probability is that a new

dues schedule will be on the agenda for next year's meeting.

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associations (ACA, for example), and individual members. Because it is the profession's official liaison to UNESCO. Because it has been a principal sponsor of professional literature for all nations. The international Code of Ethics was a project of the Section of Professional Associations (to which ACA belongs). The international standards for description and archival authority were products of ICA working groups. The international guidelines for archival legis-

lation were products of an ICA committee. And so on. If ICA did not exist we would have to invent it to have a focus for international archival cooperation, coordination, and professional development. We in the archival world cannot afford to be without ICA—a healthy ICA.

The annual general meeting was just one of the Abu Dhabi events. The International Conference of the Round Table on Archives (CITRA) is the organizer of the intellectual program. This year the theme was "Records and Archives in a Global Age," with one session on archives for good governance, one on archives and records in multinational businesses and intergovernmental organizations and NGOs, and one on archives and "events of global significance" such as the tsunami in Southeast Asia and records recovery in Iraq. Elizabeth Adkins, CA, presented a paper on corporate records in the second session, as did Cheryl Pederson of ARMA. A synopsis of the sessions (titled "Report on the 2005

Nominations Sought for ACA Officers

The ACA Nominating Committee is currently selecting candidates for the ACA 2006 election. The following offices are up for election this year:

- Vice President/President-Elect;
- Treasurer;
- Regent for Exam Development;
- Regent for Outreach; and
- Nominating Committee.

The ACA membership plays an important part in the nominations process by supplying names of interested and qualified individuals to the Committee, often using the form attached to the previous year's ballot. All offices

are open equally to the recently certified, as well as to those who have previously been active with the ACA.

Most officers serve two year terms. The roles and duties of each office are spelled out in the Bylaws, but actions by the Board and membership at the 2005 meeting have made some changes. From now on, a professional bookkeeper will be employed by the Academy, relieving the Treasurer of some of the time consuming tedium previously attached to that office. The new Treasurer will not be required to handle many day-to-day financial transactions. Instead, the new Treasurer will be able to fo-

cus more on financial planning, budgeting, and other issues before the Finance Committee.

All ACA members are encouraged to share last minute nominees with:

- Todd Gilliom, Nominating Committee Chair, at gilliomt@umsystem.edu,
- Scott Cline, Regent for Nominations, at scott.cline@seattle.gov, or
- Kristy Sorensen, Committee member, at k.sorensen@mail.utexas.edu.

Final ballots are expected to be distributed to members in late April. □

Abu Dhabi (Continued from page 3)

CITRA”), the resolutions based on the sessions, and a brief report of the annual business meeting are all on the ICA website home page at <http://www.ica.org/index.php?planguage=eng>. The full papers are to be published later on the website.

Turning to the meeting of the Section on Professional As-

sociations (SPA) held in conjunction with the CITRA, certification continues to be a major interest. SPA and the European Regional Branch of the ICA are holding a joint conference in Poland in May on the theme “Archivist: Profession of the Future in Europe,” where Jim Byers will speak about ACA’s experience with certification. Another major SPA interest is in fostering inter-

national archival cooperation. SPA has an Archival Solidarity Committee which works to promote international exchange activities for archives and archivists, acts as an information clearinghouse about international projects, and works to find partners for such projects. Archival Solidarity held an open forum at SAA in New

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Discussing ACA in Europe

VII European Conference on Archives, from May 18-20, 2006 in Warsaw, Poland.

As many of you know, the Academy of Certified Archivists (ACA) became a member of the International Council on Archives (ICA) in 2003. ACA is a member of the Section of Records Management and Archival Professional Associations (SPA), and is in the regional North American Archival Network (NAANICA). The Academy's representative, Trudy Huskamp Peterson, is currently serving a term on the governing board of SPA.

ACA was asked by the European Division of ICA (EURBICA) to send a representative to take part and give a presentation at the VII European Conference on Archives, from May 18-20, 2006 in Warsaw, Poland. The reason for this request is that the title of this conference is "Archivist: Profession of the Future in Europe." The conference will be exploring the archival profession as a career and will be considering a number of issues. A primary objective of EURBICA is "... to create a European area of higher edu-

cation" where there is a system of comparability among various educational degrees and supplementary diplomas. This would promote a broader geographic area of employability throughout the European Union for archi-

*To learn more about
the VII European Conference on Archives
visit: <http://www.archiwa.gov.pl/?CIDA=43>*

vists who are European citizens, and it would encourage competitiveness of the European higher education system and greater employment mobility among European archivists. There are a number of related subjects to be explored during this conference, including archival certification.

After discussion, the request for a representative was approved by ACA, and I will be giving a presentation titled Archival Certification: The American Example. This presentation will provide the basic background about how ACA was founded and its organizational structure. The focus of the presentation will be how certification operates in ACA. It will explain who is

eligible to take the examination; how the examination is created, revised, and what it measures; how the examination is scored; and recertification. Role Delineation will figure prominently in this presentation.

At this point in time, EURBICA has not taken any specific action regarding the issue of certification. The

ACA presentation is intended to provide a basis for discussion about whether archival certification is a subject for the Europeans to explore further. It also provides ACA with the opportunity to raise our visibility by explaining who we are and what we do to a broader, international audience of professional archivists like ourselves. I am hopeful that this presentation will provide needed information for the Europeans and generate further discussion about certification. □

James Byers
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Western Archives Institute Registration Available

The 20th annual Western Archives Institute will be held at San Diego State University in San Diego, California, June 18-30, 2006. This intensive, two-week program provides integrated instruction in basic archival practices to individuals with a variety of goals, including those whose jobs require a fundamental understanding of archival skills, but have little or no previous archives education; those who have expanding responsibility for archival materials; those who are practicing archivists but have

not received formal instruction; and those who demonstrate a commitment to an archival career.

The program will feature site visits to historical records repositories and a diverse curriculum that includes history and development of the profession, theory and terminology, records management, appraisal, arrangement, description, manuscripts acquisition, archives and the law, photographs, preservation administration, reference and access, out-

reach programs, and managing archival programs and institutions.

Tuition for the program is \$650 and includes a selection of archival publications. Housing and meal plans are available at additional cost. Admission is by application only and enrollment is limited. The application deadline for the 20th Western Archives Institute is March 15, 2006. For additional information and an application

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several of our charter members for some time. This need first came to my attention when the ACA Board last year formalized the donation agreement for the records of the Academy of Certified Archivists to the University Archives of the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. Conversing with members at the annual business meeting in New Orleans also helped to bring the need to the forefront. The Academy is only a few years away

from an important anniversary, the creation of the Interim Board for Certification by the Society of American Archivists. Creation and care of this early manifestation of the Academy took monumental efforts, energy and fortitude from the pioneer founders. It would seem that we are in need of a thoughtful and balanced history of the Academy of Certified Archivists. I would like to bring this to the attention of the many students of the archival enterprise and the practicing historians among us

who might see such a project as a great opportunity to contribute to the profession.

What is needed is not a celebratory and hagiographic chronicle but an intelligent and analytical work that reflects both the strides and the stumbles that have made the Academy what it is today. An historical study of this type would be a very useful document for the Academy as we move toward our twenty year founding anniversary. □

Why Seek Certification?

ACA Responds to Query

Editor's Note: Recently, someone posted a query to the Archives & Archivists listserv asking whether it was worthwhile to obtain one's certification. Cindy Smolovik, ACA Vice-President responded offline. A copy Cindy's response is provided below in full.

Hello Patricia,

I hope you don't mind, but I prefer to answer you directly instead of through the archives list, its more personal this way, to me anyway.

Certification is, of course, a personal choice. For me, certification represents a commitment to our profession because it requires something from me in return. Certification requires professional development. Professional development both in terms of the profession itself and individual development.

To gain certification requires a test of your knowledge and skills, which in itself can be seen as a personal achievement. However, maintaining the certification is what gives you the satisfaction of expanding your knowledge, contributing your skills as an archivist through attendance

at workshops, conferences, and as a leader through participation on committees, boards and other professional activities.

Can you do these things without certification? Of course you can, but having and maintaining certification gives you a more active incentive to do so. So often, we have good intentions to do these things, but our day to day activities tend to push them to the side, having certification maintenance as part of your day to day activity helps keep it on the front burner. In some cases, especially my own, certification maintenance needs have also been recognized by employers when it comes to funding for workshops and other professional development support.

In addition, I have found certification gives me certain amount of respect outside of our profession. In the course of our jobs we are often dealing with professionals in other areas (doctors, lawyers, engineers, CPA's, etc...) who also have a certification process of their own. In recognizing that I am certified, they may not understand what an archivist or records manag-

ers does exactly, but they do recognize the concept of being certified as a symbol of knowledge and level of expertise.

I hope this helps you in some way with your decision. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Cindy C. Smolovik, CA, CRM

Newsletter Assistance Needed

Beginning with this issue, the *ACA News* is expanding from three to four issues each year. As a result, we are in the hunt for both content and writers.

If you have any thoughts on possible articles, or, better yet, are willing to write an occasional article or two, please contact the editor of the *ACA News*, Joe Ciccone, at cicconej2@yahoo.com.



ACA News

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Institute (Continued from page 6)

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The application package is currently available on the California State Archives web site at <http://www.ss.ca.gov/archives/archives.htm> and on the Society of California Archivists web site at <http://www.calarchivists.org>

www.calarchivists.org under Western Archives Institute.

The Western Archives Institute is co-sponsored by the Society of California Archivists, the California State Archives and San Diego State University Library and Information Access. □

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Orleans and plans to hold another one at SAA Washington. □

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