



January 2010

NEWS FLASH – Haitian Earthquake

At the time of preparing this newsletter the distressing news of the disaster in Haiti unfolded. Our thoughts are with the people in Haiti and we are awaiting news about how the museums and cultural sites have been affected and how museums in the Caribbean can help.

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MAC is an organization to help Museums and Museum professionals in the Caribbean. It relies on the membership to direct and help the elected Board who do all the work voluntarily. This is YOUR organization and the more the membership help, the more active MAC can be.

Happy New Year



The MAC Board and some MAC members at Bathsheba during a tour of Barbados, December 3rd 2009, following the AGM Meeting

The Museums Association of the Caribbean Board wishes all its members and fellow museum colleagues a Happy New Year.

Coming out of a successful Annual General Meeting, the MAC Board has a very challenging year ahead trying to organize an Emergency Planning Training course, developing projects that are inclusive for the whole Caribbean region, working in partnerships with the International Council of Museums (ICOM), ICOM-LAC (Latin America and Caribbean), the Pacific Islands Museums Association (PIMA) and the International Association of Caribbean Archaeologists (IACA). As usual the MAC Board needs the support not only of the MAC membership but also of all the people who work in museums and heritage sector in the Caribbean.

For MAC to go forward we need more members – not only will this provide greater income to MAC to help finance some of its work, but also a more active larger membership means that there will be greater and more successful projects. This is an ideal time to join MAC as the association will be offering a lot more to the members, such as free training places, support and the newsletter. As the MAC website is updated later this year there will be a ‘members only’ section; also, the newsletter will be sent out exclusively to members.

All issues of the newsletter can be downloaded from the MAC website:

Sonja Arias, President



Centro Cultural Eduardo León Jimenes (Dominican Republic).
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Message from the President

Last year proved to be quite difficult due to the global economic crisis, which affected our countries and particularly our museums. This new year brings more challenges and we will need creativity and discipline to overcome them, find the opportunities embedded in them and succeed.

A great deal of effort went into the preparation of MAC's 21st Annual General Meeting and Conference. I thank the Barbados National Committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM Barbados) for organising a successful event, as well as our hosts for a warm welcome in Barbados. I also want to thank the old and new members who attended the AGM.

During 2009 some of MAC's projects didn't develop as planned; however, due to their importance they have been reintroduced in the 2010-2012 Forward Plan. Progress was made in other areas.

Three newsletters were produced and in at least two languages. There has been very positive feedback from colleagues from different parts of the world; some have known MAC for years and others just learned about our association. The newsletters have driven more traffic to our website (www.caribbeanmuseums.com). Its content has been updated and in 2010 further work will be done on it to make it easier to navigate through and more interactive, with a 'members only' area.

The MAC membership pack has been renewed. It now includes a CD with the newsletters, the ICOM Code of Ethics and the association's by-laws, in English, French and Spanish. Also, during 2009 MAC was represented at the ICOM Advisory Committee meeting held in Paris in its capacity of Affiliated Organization and, later in the year, MAC was present at the CECA meeting in Iceland.

In 2008 MAC agreed to start work on an inventory of Caribbean artifacts held outside the region. During the IACA AGM in Antigua, June 2009, MAC and IACA boards released a letter recording the cooperative project between IACA and MAC to learn, preserve and educate the people of the Caribbean. The two associations would compile a database of where objects and records of the Caribbean exist in the world. IACA and MAC have requested members to send in details of locations of Caribbean material. The goal is to have details of these collections on both websites. This project should be complete by the 50th anniversary of IACA in 2011.

MAC is encouraging each country to develop a booklet on Places of Memory, which in the future will be collated into a single Caribbean resource. This education project was set up by MAC Board member Dr. Reg Murphy from Antigua, who produced the first booklet, which is currently a huge success with school teachers and students in that country. Curaçao and Guadeloupe have prepared the contents and expect to publish their booklets in 2010. St Croix, St Lucia and Puerto Rico have made commitments to produce theirs this year as well. I encourage you to contact Dr. Murphy for more information on this important project.

We had planned to hold an Emergency Training in 2009, but the economic situation didn't allow for the funds to become available. MAC and ICOM are joining fundraising efforts so that this much needed training can take place this year. See more details on page 8.

Work continues on the directory of Caribbean museums, the follow up on the use of the Slave Route Project information and the permanent location of our archives.

MAC continues to pursue the goal of being a diverse, inclusive and active association. The involvement of its members is key to the fulfillment of our mission and the potential of our organisation.

Introduction to the New Board Members



Nigel Sadler, Vice President nigel.sadler@sandsoftimeconsultancy.com

Nigel Sadler has 20 years experience of running museums. He set up Sands of Time Consultancy to carry out research on slavery, and to provide support for museums. He is the former director of the Turks and Caicos National Museum and was MAC President (2003-6).



Bishnu Tulsie, Treasurer btulsie@candw.lc

Mr. Tulsie is currently the Director of the Saint Lucia National Trust. Originally from Guyana, he worked as teacher for 23 years before joining the Ministry of Planning. Over the past few years, he has served as an Executive Committee Member, Secretary and President of the Guyana/Saint Lucia Association.



David Hayes, Secretary and Membership Officer david_hayes_stx@yahoo.com

David, born on St. Croix, holds a M.S. in Industrial Archaeology and is a consulting archaeologist. He is secretary of the Society of V. I. Historians and has chaired the V.I. Historic Preservation Commission in the U.S. V. I. He represents St. Croix Archaeological Society.



Hazel Brookes, Associate Member Representative habrookes@gmail.com

Hazel is a Researcher/Museum Consultant based in St Kitts. Her recent work has included writing text for the International Slavery Museum, Liverpool, UK. She is a member of ICOM, St. Christopher Heritage Society and Brimstone Hill Society.



Elfrieda Bissember nga.cu@guyana.net.gy

Elfrieda is the Director of the National Gallery of Art of Guyana and Curator of the National Collection of Art. The gallery supports contemporary artists and is a centre for the arts through its programme of literary evenings, book launches, lectures and a monthly film programme, among other activities.



Staci-Marie Dehaney smdehaney@instituteofjamaica.org.jm

Staci-Marie is the Director of the Museums of History and Ethnography, a Division of the Institute of Jamaica. Staci-Marie holds a Masters in Heritage Studies and an MBA. She is interested in colonial material culture and their representation in museums.



Susana Guimarães, Associate Member Representative susana.guimaraes@wanadoo.fr

Susana is the director of Musée Edgar Clerc, Guadeloupe. She holds an M.A. in pre-Columbian archaeology and museology and has worked on archaeological projects in Colombia, Ecuador and Guadeloupe, and on the valorisation of the heritage of St Laurent du Maroni.



Dr Reg Murphy regmurphy@hotmail.com

Dr Murphy began as an amateur archaeologist and helped found the Museum of Antigua. He gained a PhD in Archaeology and returned to Antigua in 1999 to work for the National Parks Authority. He established the Field Research Centre for archaeological work on Antigua.



Cyril Saltibus cyrilsaltibus@gmail.com

Cyril has served for over 10 years as a member of the Le Pavillon Royal Museum. Cyril also serves as Counsellor of the Saint Lucia National Trust, is involved with conservation projects and is a member of the steering team for the Memories of the World Committee in Saint Lucia.



Ieteke Witteveen (Past President) ieteke@onenet.an

Ieteke 'Inchi' Witteveen is director of the National Archaeological- Anthropological Memory Management Foundation (NAAM), Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, and former MAC President (2006-8). She has conducted anthropological research in Colombia and Curaçao.

Annual General Meeting and Conference, Barbados 2009

The Museums Association of the Caribbean's AGM was held from November 30th until December 3rd in Barbados. The hosts and organizers were the Barbados National Committee of ICOM, the National Art Gallery Committee, Black Diaspora VisualArt, International Curators Forum and the Cultural Leadership Programme in the UK.

The conference was attended by over 60 delegates from the French, English, Dutch and Spanish Caribbean as well as Europe, Australasia and Africa who gathered to explore the theme of "Caribbean Curatorship and National Identity."

The conference was launched by welcoming presentations from ICOM President Alissandra Cummins, MAC President Sonja Arias, ICOM Barbados Chairperson Peggy McGeary and President of the Museum & Historical Society Dr Trevor Carmichael, Q.C.

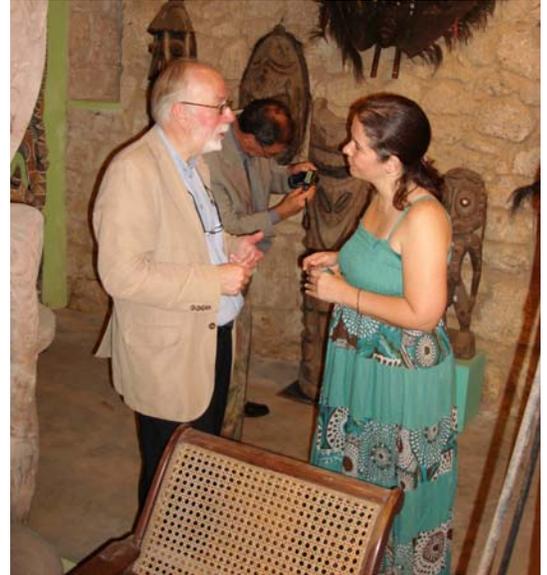
During the AGM and conference there were sessions on:

- Breaking the Silence
- Reconstructing/Deconstructing Identity: Place and Memory
- Generational Shifts Within the Caribbean Diaspora
- Cultural leadership; Global Focus
- Networks that Work For You

Sonja Arias and Nigel Sadler also made a presentation to the ICOM Executive Committee during their meeting in Barbados. They highlighted the challenges faced by museums in the Caribbean region, ranging from the physical movement between the islands, the financial costs of working in the region and the training needs. They noted that these problems were not unique to the Caribbean region but also to other island groupings such as the Pacific Islands Museums Association (PIMA) and hoped that ICOM were able to provide more support to the small island nations. Sonja and Nigel also noted the problems that the region consisted of independent nations and some islands which still come under the control of European nations and the USA. At present the latter islands are represented at ICOM by ICOM-USA, ICOM-UK, ICOM-Netherlands, ICOM France and who do not prioritise these countries.

During the AGM and informally one clear message that came from the members of MAC was that they wanted to see MAC more active with projects. The success of the UNESCO Slave Route Project has shown that MAC can lead on projects and there needs to be more inclusive and challenging work. The MAC Board was tasked with seeking out new projects for its members.

Images from Barbados



MAC President Sonja Arias with Per Bjorn Rekdal (chair of ICOM working group on Regional Alliances and Regional Affiliates) during one of the evening receptions



Board members David Hayes and Sonja Arias preparing for the AGM



Delegates at the meeting listening to the presentation by the new MAC Board member Staci-Marie Dehaney

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Annual General Meeting and Conference, Barbados 2009 (continued)

Images from around Barbados

Photos taken on tours during the AGM.



Arlington House Museum, Speightstown



Street scene in Speightstown



Emancipation Statue, Bridgetown



Independence Arch, Bridgetown

Images on this page © Sands of Time Consultancy

Resolutions

No new resolutions were passed in 2009, but those passed in 2008 remain a fundamental part of the future development of MAC. These resolutions are:

1. MAC will advocate that governments throughout the Caribbean promote and enforce legislation and actions to protect museums, historical, natural, and cultural heritages sites.
2. MAC will consult with museums and other institutions around the world to identify and inventory tangible artifacts, records of intangible heritage and research records which relate to the Caribbean, for further research, and the economic and cultural benefit for the people of the Caribbean.
3. MAC calls upon governments and regional institutions to strengthen support and partnership towards the further preservation and promotion of the cultural heritage of the Caribbean for the social and economic development of the people of the Caribbean.

The Tours and Receptions

The AGM's are not all business. One benefit of attending the AGM is it gives the opportunity to visit other museums and learn from their experiences, as well as talking informally to other professionals. It is often these experiences that remain the strongest memories of any AGM.

The first evening the Pelican Crafts Centre hosted a reception during which several of the local art galleries opened up to exhibit locally produced crafts. The second evening reception was at the Barbados Museum where the Minister of Culture, Hon. Steve Blackett, welcomed the delegates and challenged MAC to help bring back to the Caribbean the items held in museums outside the region.

The final formal reception was provided by the owners of Colleton Plantation who opened up their home for an evening reception and dinner.

There were three formal tours: (1) a walking tour of Bridgetown where a local historian shared their knowledge with the delegates, (2) a full day tour of the island taking in the local art studios, and (3) a bus around the island to see the landmarks.

Case Study: Recovery of a Stolen Duho in 2003

Bringing the duho home



Senior Bahamas museum Staff, Dr Tinker and Kim Outten Stubbs, inspecting the duho



Collecting the duho in the Bahamas, 2003



Unveiling the duho at the Turks and Caicos National Museum

All images on this page © Sands of Time Consultancy and Turks and Caicos National Museum

*If you have any stories of recovered stolen items, please send a short article to MAC
(see article details on page 10)*

In the last couple of issues we have highlighted the theft of the Rum Still in St Croix, and MAC has requested the help of the heritage community not only in finding the still but also in helping recover other stolen or missing items. In this issue we highlight a successful recovery of a stolen item to show that it can be done.

During the MAC AGM in the Turks and Caicos Islands in 2001 the museum opened its new Lucayan Gallery. The gallery was lacking a major Lucayan item, a ceremonial seat known as a duho, and was unable to gain on loan the two duhos from the Caicos Islands held by the Smithsonian institution. Also, the only complete duho to remain in the country, the best example so far found, had been stolen from the Victoria Library, Grand Turk in the late 1970s, over a decade before the museum had opened.

The duho was just one item stolen at the time and it seemed that these items were being stolen to be sold to collectors; therefore it would be unlikely that they would ever be recovered. The museum had already spent time looking for the duho but all the leads it followed had failed.

Fate was then to play a hand. In 2003 Andre Godet had come from Canada to visit Grand Turk, where his family had come from. He was impressed by the museum and suddenly things fell into place. His grandfather Leon had recovered the duho from the thieves but had realized returning it to the library would just see it being stolen again. He died before the museum had opened, and his possessions had been taken by his family to the Bahamas. Following a visit to the Bahamas Museum the family had identified the wooden object as a duho but did not know what to do with it.

International museum codes of ethics state a museum must not knowingly take in stolen property, but in this instance, following a meeting with the Attorney General, it was decided that it was not in the country's interest to pursue the possible prosecution of anybody involved in the return of the duho. It was in fact deemed more important to get the item into the safekeeping of the museum for the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Now the path was open. Working with local government agencies and the Bahamas Museum staff the duho was collected from the family, packaged and shipped to Grand Turk. It was unveiled at a special evening at the museum and now has pride of place in the Lucayan Gallery.

Caribbean Cultural Heritage Website Launch in Curaçao

The National Archaeological Anthropological Memory Management (NAAM) in cooperation with S.A.L. Mongui Maduro Library and Museum, and the Bonaire Museum launched the Caribbean Cultural Heritage website on 25th November 2009. The three heritage partners have developed this new website to exhibit the 'treasures' from each museum and cultural heritage institutes.

This website is an initiative to link all the museums and cultural heritage institutes of the Caribbean, beyond fragmentation on geographical, cultural and linguistic barriers, and to display the cultural heritage from each island or nation. The website is an online exhibition of each of the participating museum's most valuable objects. Currently there are three museums participating, however, this website is meant for museums from all over the Caribbean. Museums or heritage institutes that are not located in the Caribbean but do have treasures of our region are also welcome to participate. This website is a platform to learn and appreciate the colorful variations of the heritage Caribbean. The 'treasures' on the website will enlighten the collective memories of the region.

Visit the website at <http://www.caribbeanculturalheritage.org>. For more information email Liza Francisco on info@naam.an.

This website was designed by Kuki & Co. and is made possible with the financial support of the Mondriaan Foundation, in the Netherlands.



First participants in the Cultural Heritage Website

Image © NAAM

Emergency Planning Training

Recent events in Haiti have illustrated how the Caribbean is prone to a wide range of natural disasters: hurricanes, volcanoes, earthquakes and tsunamis. On top of this, the area still faces the usual issues of fire, flood and water damage, vandalism and theft (see page 6). It is for these reasons that in recent years many museum professionals have identified one of their needs for training as emergency planning.

In a joint effort with ICOM, the Museums Association of the Caribbean (MAC) Board is busy seeking funding and support for a formal emergency planning training programme to be held in 2010. The training will look at how to prepare an Emergency Plan, immediate emergency care for damaged collections following an incident and scenarios to carry out full training of staff to test the emergency plans. It is planned that the training course will last a full week and will bring in experts to share their knowledge and experiences.

At time of going to press the MAC Board is still negotiating with potential funders and venues. However, at the centre of the training programme is to make as many places as free as possible to MAC Members and seeking funding to cover airfares and accommodation costs as well. If you or your museum would like to participate please contact MAC to register your interest.

Cayman Islands National Museum Re-opens

By Debra Barnes-Tabora

The Old Courts Building, home of the Cayman Islands National Museum (CINM), is the islands' oldest surviving public structure. In September, 2004, Hurricane Ivan devastated the museum's buildings; mold consumed its galleries and the collections required salvage and stabilization before re-housing.

Work to repair the museum building complex began in early 2007. It was paramount to respect the building's historical integrity as the intricacies of conforming to new building code specifications and delicate traditional craftsmanship compounded works. The site's sole stone structure, the Gaol, was declared an archaeological site with the discovery of historic writings beneath layers of daub on the walls, halting all plans. Mediation, conservation and research took primacy.

Today, the newly re-branded National Museum, equipped for the 21st century, boasts enhanced infrastructure, a multi-dimensional object theatre and universally designed natural and cultural history exhibitions. First known for our abundance of turtles, it is fitting that man's interaction with the animal is the common thread throughout the permanent galleries. Cleverly weaved into displays depicting 500 years of history, life-size dioramas provide a glimpse of our people and past social activities. From turtle habitats to the men who hunted them – their life on and off the sea engage visitors.

The museum unofficially re-opened on 1 September, 2009. Debra Barnes-Tabora's knowledge of the collection meant she lead recovery efforts following Hurricane Ivan and the re-generation of the museum. Debra wishes to express her gratitude to the museum board and staff and to the volunteers and agencies who assisted the museum after the 2004 storm and during its recent refurbishment.

Cayman Islands National Museum



2007- Reinforcement work in the Old Courts Building, Cultural History Gallery



2009- Mangrove Diorama

All images on this page © Debra Barnes-Tabora

**MEMBERSHIP & RENEWAL FORM
MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION OF THE CARIBBEAN (MAC)
2009 - 2010**

Please check the appropriate categories in both columns:

- New member
- Institutional membership (US\$100 annual dues)
- Renewal
- Associate membership (US\$50 annual dues)

Last name: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

If applying for institutional membership, please give a short description of your organization:

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Website: _____

By signing this form, I agree to abide by the ICOM Code of Ethics.

Signature _____

Annual dues are payable at the Annual General Meeting & Conference. If you are not attending, you may send this form along with payment (check drawn to US Bank) to:

Bishnu Tulsie
Treasurer, Museums Association of the Caribbean
c/o St Lucia National Trust
Pigeon Island National Landmark, P.O. Box 595, Castries
Saint Lucia
btulsie@candw.lc

Upcoming Events

2010

June

World Heritage and Tourism Conference

3-4 June 2010, Quebec City, Canada

July

Seminar – Constructing the Caribbean: Exploring our own agenda Dimensions of the Caribbean Space

9-10 July 2010, Centro León, Santiago, Dominican Republic

November

ICOM Conference in China

7-12 November at the World Expo Center, Shanghai

Watch this space for more information

To be confirmed

Emergency Planning for Museums Training Course

Future International Museum Day (IMD) Themes

2010 IMD theme is the same theme as the Shanghai conference –
Museums and Social Harmony

2011 IMD theme is Museum and Memory

2012 IMD theme will be selected at the 2010 Shanghai conference

2013 IMD theme is Museums (memory + creativity = Social Change),
which is the theme for the conference in Rio de Janeiro

If you have information, or are organising an event please send details for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Contributing Articles to the Newsletter

Would you like to write an article for the newsletter? We are looking for articles on the work being carried out by museums in the Caribbean, requests for help, or on any information that you think your colleagues would find of use.

For articles please submit no more than 400 words and three or four images in jpg format. Please send your articles to:

nigel.sadler@sandsoftimeconsultancy.com

The deadline for receipt of articles is a full month before the publication date. The 2010 provisional publication dates are:

January 31st - April 30th - July 31st - October 31st

However, publication dates might change to fit in the need to release information to the members.

Latest News

St Lucia National Trust

A new Council has been selected to guide the affairs of the Saint Lucia National Trust (SLNT) over the next year. The seven members elected at the SLNT's 33rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on Saturday, October 10, 2009 are Brian Evans, Cyril Saltibus, Diana Theodore, Lydia Cox, Simone Mondesir, Maureen Louis and Richard Jn. Marie.

The meeting organized by the Trust's Southern Chapter, with support from staff and generous sponsors, was held under the distinguished patronage of the Governor General of Saint Lucia, Her Excellency Dame Pearllette Louisy, at the Coconut Bay Beach Resort in Vieux Fort. The event was divided into three parts: an opening ceremony, the AGM and an afternoon conference. The AGM's theme was "Preserving Saint Lucia's Patrimony for Future Generations".

In his welcome remarks, the Trust's Director, Mr. Bishnu Tulsie, used the opportunity to inform members present and specially invited guests about the recently approved Strategic Plan which is expected to chart a new way forward for the Trust. He also called on the general membership to become more involved in the work of the Trust as we seek to become "a movement and not just an organization", with a greater focus on conservation through advocacy and volunteerism. This Strategic Plan is expected to be implemented during the period 2010 to 2020.

If you want further information about MAC, want to become a member of the Association, want to receive this newsletter, know someone who would be interested in receiving this newsletter or to have information that you would like to share through this newsletter, please contact Nigel Sadler
