



COMMONWEALTH ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS CAM BULLETIN

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THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

AS SOCIAL TOLERANCE
SEEMS INCREASINGLY
COMPROMISED IN THE
DEVELOPED WORLD ARE
MUSEUMS ALSO FAILING
IN A CRITICAL ROLE?

Last October my wife Angele and I spent a week in Paris attending the ICOM/ICTOP conference. As we visited historic monuments, museums and galleries we remarked to each other an unavoidable observation. That is what seemed to be the suppression of visible minorities into an underclass of service workers and street hawkers. And nowhere was this more evident than in museums themselves. Two days after our return to Canada Paris erupted into some of the worst and destructive rioting since the student street confrontations of the 1960s.

The European Union is one of the most progressive experiments in the history of statecraft. It is the first federated state to actually be constructed on the foundation of a code of human rights. (And as such goes far beyond codes of "civil rights".) Yet despite this the tragic events of 9/11 have revealed deep stresses within the European body politic, and along with it, civil society. In fact in Europe many commentators mark the Nov. 2, 2004, assassination of Dutch film-maker Theo Van Gogh at the hands of a self-proclaimed Somalian jihadist as the turning point in European social tolerance.

Germany, Holland, France quickly declared intentions to restrict immigration. Far right political movements are flourishing in Italy, Holland, France, Austria, Belgium and Germany. Restrictive government policies are directed at immigrants and minority populations. The Dutch government now requires immigrants to pass a language test within 5 years or risk deportation. Rotterdam city has published a code of conduct requiring immigrants to speak Dutch in public. In France, the current Interior Minister Nicholas Sarkozy, a presidential hopeful, is proposing a new immigration act based on the Dutch one. Britain for the first time introduced a US style citizenship ceremony for new nationals and requires a declaration of loyalty. Wearing of the niqab or hijab, according to one influential government minister, is to be discouraged, in some instances could be banned.

Across Europe criticism of decades of official multiculturalism is coming under attack from some unlikely quarters. Trevor Phillips, a black political journalist and head of Britain's Commission for Racial Equality, has publicly observed that such policies are outdated as they fail to address cultural differences or reinforce cultural values. Indeed they may be leading to segregation. Michael Nazir-Ali, the Pakistani-born Anglican Bishop of Rochester has been quoted as saying that multiculturalism has failed to deliver societal peace, and further more may be contributing to isolation and extremism.

So where are museums in this debate? Numerous UNESCO and ICOM declarations have reinforced diversity, multi-culturalism, religious and racial tolerance as ideals. CAM itself is dedicated to supporting the Commonwealth's program for promoting diversity, civil society and social cohesion. A few museums world-wide are noted for

SECRETARY GENERAL'S NOTE

programmatically leadership, among the foremost are Robben Island in South Africa (www.robben-island.org.za/vision.asp), and community museums in Derry, Northern Ireland. The International Network of Peace Museums was established at Guernica in 2005. (www.museumsforpeace.org/about_the_international_network_museums_for_peace.htm) CAM devoted its 1999 annual conference to this subject. A 1999 ICTOP course put on jointly by the University of Zagreb and the University of Victoria in post-war Dubrovnik, Croatia, made some tentative steps in articulating a Museology of Reconciliation. (www.maltwood.uvic.ca/tmr)

However it now seems evident that museums need to rejoin the diversity debate at the policy, practical and professional levels world wide, and with some urgency. Exhibitions, collections, and education programs must be examined and critiqued for their role in fostering intercultural tolerance and understanding. National museums and state museum systems, many of them founded on the very idea of defining nationhood and some tending to chauvinistic iterations of that principle, need to seriously re-examine their mandates and expressions of nationalism. Perhaps a role for CAM, representing a coalition of countries which have seriously addressed the implications of immigration, racial discrimination and armed conflict, could start by developing a catalogue of best practices for a museology of social tolerance and understanding. Do museums in the developing world have something to teach those in developed world?

Martin Segger
Victoria, 2007

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Opinions expressed by individual writers imply no endorsement by the Commonwealth Association of Museums.

CAM Bulletins have been notable by their absence in recent years. The last one was over three years ago before the 2003 Triennial Programme in Liverpool (*Museums in the Commonwealth: Global Vision, Local Mission*). As many of you are aware, there have been some reasons for this including illnesses and the untimely death of our energetic leader and President. Several other prominent members have also died during this period. However, we regret that it has been such a long period of silence for some of you and apologize for neglecting our duty of communication.

With the newly structured website and this Bulletin we are beginning a period of more frequent contact and hope to put a significantly more visible CAM face into the international picture through the website, more frequent Bulletins, a membership brochure and more frequent contact in other ways.

This Bulletin is the first of several that we will issue in the next few months to bring members up to date. We have been active in carrying workshops, internships, the Distance Learning Programme and planning activities. It will take about four Bulletins to bring our news up to date and each one will contain some fresh news as well and picking up events from the interim period.

We are also much behind in our publications and have a couple of strategies to catch up in this area as well. One is to publish two or three preliminary papers from triennial programmes which have been held, but papers not published, in order to keep them in mind before we are able to produce the final compilation. We will also be considering the method of publishing whether it be hard copy, website, CD, or email.

Finally, with our current President's assistance and the availability of Angela Rook, our web designer and computer expert, we expect to be able to expedite some of these activities with resources that we have not previously had access to. Their help will be extremely important in improving CAM's ability to achieve our activity and communication objectives. Emmanuel would have been very happy see this happening as he was always and rightly concerned that CAM did not communicate and publish as often as we should.

NEWS AND EVENTS

At the **CAM 2003** in Liverpool, The Cowrie Circle was presented to two members of the museum community, Reginald J. Varney, founding member of CAM and Senior Exhibition Officer with the former Commonwealth Institute in London and Catherine Antomarchi, of ICCROM who played a strong role in developing Commonwealth professionals in Africa through the PREMA program Prevention in Museums in Africa. Her colleague, Gael de Guichen, also responsible, along with Catherine and Emmanuel Arinze, for the formation of PREMA was presented with the pin in 2001 when the opportunity arose in Barcelona at ICOM 2001. Watch for their stories and other Cowrie Circle presentations in the coming Bulletins.

The Children's Art Exhibit "*What Peace Means to Me*" opened in the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria, in October 2006, for a trial run and to develop some program enhancements to go with it. Five pieces are displayed on the website for your interest. Watch the website and the Bulletin for further review and information on circulation.

CAM was fortunate to receive **two internships** for 2006-7 from the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canadian Museums Association. The Young Canada Works – Building Careers in Heritage Program funded Nicole Thomson from Alberta to go to Malawi and work with Michael Gondwe and Aaron Maluwa to move forward on the Poverty Project which was an outcome from the "Realizing the Dream" the third GCAM workshop in 2005. Catherine Couturier, from Quebec traveled to Botswana to assist in the education and exhibition programming for renewed display halls.

COMING SOON

The Bahamas, September 2007 – Group for Children in Caribbean Museums Workshop, Theme: Developing Children's Programs around Slavery and the Slave Trade All details to be confirmed. Will be held in conjunction with a conference organized by the National Museum of the Bahamas to commemorate the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807.

CAM 2008 – location and details to be announced soon

CAM'S NEW WEBSITE UP AND MOVING FORWARD!

At the end of October 2006, CAM launched a restructured website at www.maltwood.uvic.ca/cam. An announcement has just been sent out to alert all of you who may not have checked recently.

Please send us your comments and suggestions! We would be happy to have you send us news items for the website or Bulletin, articles on your museum or museums in your country and photos. Let us know too if you don't find what you expect on the website or if you have difficulty printing content or finding what you're looking for.

The website was researched and designed by Angela Rook, Information Architect & Graphic Designer, in order to better serve our members and the public. It is meant to be straightforward, easy to navigate, and simple and attractive in design. It is colourful and includes a significant number of heading photos which will be changed from time to time as we add to our photo collection from our activities and members. Articles and news may also contain photos.

CAM sees the site as a central hub for CAM communication and already it contains more information than we have had in one accessible location previously. It also links to other international museum organizations and to national museums in the Commonwealth where possible. It has a few other resources as well as CAM material. It was also designed to be able to update and insert new material quickly and easily.

There will be changes regularly to the website as we can put them together and add them including photos of Council, more information on recent activities, reports, etc and the latest Bulletins. We will work towards adding information on CAM events and activities which complements the Bulletins instead of simply duplicating them. As we have worked on the website, our understanding of where to go with it has expanded and we continue to discuss options and additional features with Angela. She has agreed to assist with the website on an ongoing basis as long as she has time and we expect to eventually have two of us who will be able to update and add.

MUSEUMS IN THE COMMONWEALTH: GLOBAL VISION, LOCAL MISSION

CAM's Commonwealth-wide programme was held in Liverpool from July 15-18, 2003. Originally scheduled for April 6-11, it was postponed because of the beginning of the Iraq War. Even though it changed some of the participants, the Executive Council decided that it would not proceed at that time both because of our limited finances and unknown consequences of the war in the UK and as a general step back from an unpopular strategy. After discussion, it was decided to proceed in Liverpool in July. Liverpool was a particularly appropriate city for the theme meeting because of its diversity, the philosophy of community within the leadership of National Museums Liverpool and the history of wide-reaching and lengthy global involvement of the city itself.

The CAM gathering included 20 core participants, 2 keynote speakers and about 9 other speakers and staff who participated during various sessions of the 4-day conference. Participants came from Nigeria, Canada, Malawi, Kenya, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Northern Ireland, Barbados, The Bahamas, Cameroon, United States, India, Italy and the UK. In spite of the erratic elevators, participants enjoyed the spaciousness of the wonderful Adelphi Hotel.

The theme was well established by Rudo Chitiga, then Deputy Director of The Commonwealth Foundation in London. She spoke of the global vision of the Commonwealth and the role that Commonwealth Associations can play in achieving objectives within civil societies of the Commonwealth along with other NGOs. Commonwealth associations are the "voice of the Commonwealth on the ground and what is visible of the Commonwealth." The Commonwealth and the associations need to be relevant to the realities of the life of today. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) decided by the UN Millennium Summit in 2000 have also been adopted as objectives by the Commonwealth governments and the organizations of civil society are of key importance in contributing to these ends. Another objective of Commonwealth efforts is to promote the understanding of the link between democracy and development and actions that integrate them so they mutually reinforce each other. She elaborated on the activities that the Common-

wealth undertakes to move forward and spoke well of CAM as a responsive and outward-looking association.

Ms. Chitiga went on to comment directly on the roles that museums can play. "The museum, I think, has a key role in the empowerment of people... the museum is a centre where people can reaffirm their belief in their abilities" She spoke movingly of personal experience "all my life whenever things didn't seem to be working...when I felt there were too many things coming from all directions that I couldn't cope, I always went to the Great Zimbabwe Monument to spend a weekend there...and just look and see that there are people of my Mother's tribe who built this, therefore, it is in my genes to do great things or to succeed." The museum can inspire and the museum must act as memory in places where devastation from HIV AIDS has removed a large number of those who transmit cultural memory and knowledge to families and communities. The museum must help to stabilize. She encouraged CAM to undertake to ensure that museums in the Commonwealth have disaster plans to meet the challenges of conflict and natural disasters and help people to preserve their heritage. Ms Chitiga concluded by encouraging CAM to continue to be relevant and respond to the challenges of today. Commonwealth associations must be able to do this in order to justify the support they receive and in return support the Commonwealth.

Dr. David Fleming, Director of National Museums Liverpool was the main speaker from the museum sector and kept the audience's attention with the fascinating story of the City of Liverpool. He began by noting that Liverpool is a "very peculiar and unusual city." Its population is diverse and much more Celtic than many English cities. This great city has experienced the extremes of wealth and poverty sometimes at the same time and was once the world's second or third busiest trading port. It has become a very poor city by UK standards when it once enjoyed economic preeminence. That preeminence is reflected in the magnificent dockside buildings and what we would now call corporate headquarters as well as the size and permanence of the docks themselves. Its foundation in shipping, trading and insurance, its immigration gateway into and out of the UK, and latterly its difference po-

litically from the rest of the country, have contributed to the city's "strong sense of independence and identity. The city is also an extraordinary centre of creativity "which is very much a function of the mix of people"

Dr. Fleming went on to describe the great collection of museums in Liverpool including the Walker Art Gallery, The Lady Leaver Gallery and Sudley House, the Customs and Excise National Museum housed with the Maritime Museum, the world-famous Conservation Centre and the Museum of Liverpool. In 1986, they were nationalized and are now supported by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport – National Museums Liverpool is the only English national museum outside of London. Thus National Museums Liverpool is multidisciplinary, in a regional city, with responsibility for museum service in Liverpool as well as national responsibilities and based in a location with an international history – a fourfold role: local, regional, national and international.

He noted that Liverpool is a city built on trade and certainly in the last two to three hundred years it has always looked outward. Its stories have international resonance in a way that does not happen in many other cities. While Liverpool has a very successful story, it is inextricably connected to a darker side at its heart. Much of the wealth existed alongside of chronic poverty and above all was created through the infamous and brutal slave trade. This story is told in the Transatlantic Slave Gallery "Against Human Dignity" in the Maritime Museum and must always be remembered to alert all of us to the inhumanity of our species. David Fleming went on to say that Liverpool with its story has a responsibility to reconcile the global and the local and to work within Britain and with organizations such as CAM to do so.

There were other excellent papers given during the conference and much rich discussion. Other speakers included Garry Morris and Tony Tibbles (National Museums Liverpool) speaking on "Slavery Remembrance Day" and "Interpreting Slavery: The British Experience." Peter Nias of the Bradford Peace Museum reflected on a strategy to ensure that local, national and international needs are met within his museum and Michael Gondwe, Malawi,

Robert Heslip, Northern Ireland, and Fredrick Karanja, outlined innovative projects concerning museums and young people. Andrew Roberts of the Museum of London described "The Moving Here project" finding and recording materials about 200 years of migration to England and Fiona Davison recounted the work of the Hackney Museum in East London with immigrant communities and individuals. Shahid Vawda and Gerard Corsane brought two perspectives from South Africa on living heritage which is such an important part of diverse identities that museums must represent and keep in mind.



(above) CAM delegates on tour

The discussion led to the *Liverpool Declaration on Museums in the Commonwealth, Global Vision and Local Mission* (see below).

The Commonwealth Association of Museums wishes to extend its heartfelt appreciation to Ms Rudo Chitiga and The Commonwealth Foundation for exceptional financial and moral support and Dr. David Fleming and the staff of National Museums Liverpool for hospitality and wonderful local arrangements – especially Irene Newton and Mary Kenny for their hard work and collegial participation, Garry Morris, Tony Tibbles, Samantha Gallagher and others who participated, our courteous and friendly driver and tour guides and the helpful security staff.

Watch the CAM website at www.maltwood.uvic.ca/cam for further information and papers.

[National Museums Liverpool (NML) has recently appointed Richard Benjamin as Head of the International Slavery Museum which is to open in 2007, the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the TransAtlantic slave trade in Britain. The planning was ongoing at the time of the conference and NML has carried forward their role in remembering slavery with a global vision and a local mission.]

MUSEUMS IN THE COMMONWEALTH: GLOBAL VISION, LOCAL MISSION LIVERPOOL DECLARATION, JULY 18, 2003

Recognising that museums are central to cultural sustainability and the expression of identity

Cognisant that the museums have played and continue to play a unique role, both directly and indirectly, in promoting and/or addressing both global goals and issues at the local/community levels, while acknowledging that these initiatives have not always received the recognition and support that they deserve;

Conscious that Commonwealth museums are faced with the challenge to demonstrate their relevance and responsibility to their communities, by giving visibility to and adding value to that relevance through recognition of their place within Civil Society and adopting initiatives which directly address the needs of Civil Society.

Aware that Commonwealth museums can also demonstrate their relevance by being good citizens and encouraging good citizenship by example and dissemination of protocols and policies

*The Commonwealth Association of Museums within the context of the Triennial Conference on **Museums in the Commonwealth: Global Vision, Local Mission** in Liverpool, United Kingdom, shall encourage the development of **Better Museums for a Better Commonwealth**.*

The participants resolve that:

Principles

CAM will develop strategies which strengthen capacities and encourage partnerships between museums, and between museums and communities/constituencies and recognize the priorities established by the Commonwealth Foundation adopted in response to the U.N. Millennium Development Goals.

CAM will support these priorities by adopting and communicating the following principles:

- Promoting the recognition of self worth amongst all stakeholders, particularly women and youth
- Encouraging capacity building at all levels to effect change in the lives of the disenfranchised and disempowered
- Fostering the link between development and democracy and between culture and development
- Celebrating cultural diversity and encouraging dialogue amongst communities, including museum communities
- Recognising the continuing catastrophic and dehumanizing effects of slavery, violence and other crimes against humanity
- Promoting museums as a key strategy in protection of heritage
- Encouraging and accommodating mechanisms for conflict resolution within communities and families and internationally

Issues

CAM will promote awareness amongst museums, and encourage their participation in adopting policies recognising their role in addressing social and cultural issues such as:

- Peace
- Youth disempowerment and the erosion of identity
- Loss of traditional/community memory through the dislocation and destruction of societies
- Shift in museum practice from authoritative knowledge centres to knowledge sharing and facilitating participatory building and spreading of community knowledge

- Preservation and protection of cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible
- Marginalization of women from leadership in heritage management
- Migration/remigration, Diaspora and cultural diversity
- Training, continuous professional development and sharing of museum skills
- Image and perception of museums in the community
- Recognition of the changing role of the museum to include issue-based programs (e.g. terrorism, HIV, environmental destruction, etc)
- Biodiversity and environmental sustainability
- Poverty alleviation

Directions

CAM will adopt actions and activities and build partnerships with interested parties in public and private sectors, nationally and internationally which:

1. Support peace museum initiatives in the Commonwealth and encourage museums to promote the Culture of Peace and conflict resolution.
2. Encourage the flow of peace-related exhibitions among Commonwealth countries.
3. Work with relevant organisations in the protection of cultural heritage, including illicit trafficking and looting.
4. Develop a strategy for assessing the status of women in museums of the Commonwealth with a view to encouraging greater participation and representation of women in museum activities at all levels.
5. Encourage the adoption of strategies to address damage to, or destruction of, museums/heritage as a result of conflict and natural disaster
6. Identify and utilize initiatives available in the Commonwealth to support Continuous professional Development and sharing of skills.
7. Encourage initiatives which aim at the inclusion and involvement of marginalized groups in the reconstruction of both personal and collective memory and the preservation of cultural heritage
8. Support museum initiatives commemorating the Slave Trade and struggles against slavery within the Commonwealth
9. Encourage development of bipartisan relations as well as generalized networks amongst Commonwealth institutions and to the broader international community.
10. Emphasize the centrality of intangible heritage issues and urge that professional bodies are fully consulted on cultural preservation issues.
11. Encourage the development of community-led strategies to define and preserve heritage.
12. Encourage good practice in the management of intangible heritage
13. Explore and encourage practices and policies which recognize the value of cultural diversity and cultural equity and promote them in the community.
14. Adopt initiatives which promote awareness and understanding of biodiversity and the environment and disseminate information on best practices for sustainability.

Preliminary outline completed in Liverpool, July 18, 2006.

Reviewed and adopted by Declaration Committee and forwarded to the CAM Executive Council.



(photos left to right) CAM delegates on tour, at dinner, and in session

IN MEMORIAM

Michael McClean Ames, Ph.D., CM, FRSC.
Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia

After a courageous battle with non-Hodgkins lymphoma, Dr. Michael Ames passed away peacefully at the age of 72 on February 20, 2006 with his family at his side.

Michael received his B.A. (Hons) in anthropology from UBC, Ph.D. from Harvard, and did field work in Sri Lanka and post-doctoral work in South Asian Studies at the University of Chicago before returning to Canada to teach at McMaster University from 1962 and at UBC from 1964 onwards. He served as Director of the UBC Museum of Anthropology from 1974 to 1997 and after retirement as Acting Director from 2002 to 2004.

In that time, Michael was many things to many people: inspired teacher, beloved mentor, renowned scholar, demanding administrator, relentless innovator, and constant seeker of knowledge. His influence is felt worldwide through his books, articles, service to communities both academic and cultural, and most of all, through his students, many of whom chose careers as anthropologists and museum professionals because of him.

[Michael Ames was co-rapporteur with Mina McKenzie from New Zealand of "Curatorship: Indigenous Perspectives in Post-Colonial Societies," a symposium organized by the University of Victoria and the Commonwealth Association of Museums in 1994. They did masterful work during the symposium and Michael became a member of CAM and remained so until his untimely death.]

Under his leadership the UBC Museum of Anthropology became Canada's largest teaching museum, inter-

nationally recognized for its experimental approaches to educating people about the diversity of cultures. One of Michael's major research interests was museology. He published widely on the democratization of museums and their role in promoting collaboration with and cultural empowerment of indigenous peoples. He initiated one of the first consultations with the Aboriginal community regarding the appropriate handling of First Nations artifacts, their representation and access. His book *"Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums"* influenced beliefs about the modern role of museums, and he was widely sought as a consultant to museums in Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia. He conducted research on South Asia over many years, including studies of village Buddhism in Sri Lanka, industrial and community development in India, the South Asian diaspora, and Sikhs in B.C. He served as President of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, and gave extensive professional service to many academic organizations.

Michael received many academic and service honours, and in 1998 he was appointed Member of the Order of Canada in recognition of his reputation as an internationally known scholar, researcher, and author in anthropology and museology.

Donations may be made to the following:
Michael Ames Scholarship in Museum Studies
c/o UBC Museum of Anthropology
6393 N.W. Marine Drive, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2, Canada

Courtesy UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver.

A full tribute will be posted on the CAM website.