Every organization has to meet major challenges from time to time, if it is to sustain its growth and to avoid becoming a fossilized relic of the past. For ICA the first ever Annual Conference, which took place in Brussels on 23-24 November 2013, was truly a defining moment in its history. Failure, in the form of a low attendance and a sub-standard programme, would have called into question the wisdom of the reform, now enshrined in the new constitution, to replace the traditional CITRA (largely confined to national archivists and chairs of national associations) with a new-style Annual Conference open to all ICA members.

At the outset the circumstances in which the Conference was organized were by no means encouraging. The selection of the venue in Brussels was finally agreed only in December 2012, after several other possibilities had been investigated and ruled out. This left the Belgian hosts, based in the National Archives, and the small Secretariat team less than a year to organize the event from scratch. For the first time an essentially self-financing business model had to be constructed, and a Professional Conference Organizer (PCO) selected, so that all the practical requirements for a successful conference would be met. Although the theme of “Accountability, Transparency and Access to Information” had already been chosen, the work of evaluating presentation proposals and organizing them into coherent streams had not even started as we entered the year 2013. Also, at a time of recession it was far from obvious that many ICA members would be able to take advantage of the new opportunity to attend the Annual Conference. Throughout the year we had the uneasy feeling that ICA was racing against the clock, to ensure that the first ever Annual Conference would be a credit to the organization.

In the end, more or less everything clicked into place on time, as a result of the continuous hard work by my colleagues in the Secretariat team and the staff of the Belgian National Archives, ably supported by the PCO and staff at The Square Convention Centre, which lived up to its billing as a state of the art venue. A very rich and varied professional programme was put together, which attracted our members in large numbers. (Continued on page 3)
Over the two days over 500 participants from 100 countries attended the Conference at some point. It was especially pleasing to see a healthy attendance from countries outside Europe. Financial support from Belgian institutions and ICA’s own assisted places scheme significantly increased the presence of colleagues from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. The ICA Secretariat, working in partnership with the Archives of France, facilitated the participation of colleagues from Latin America, who were able to take advantage of Spanish interpretation at plenary sessions and the General Assembly. It was also pleasing to see that a sprinkling of colleagues from the Arab world were able to attend. The Conference theme generated many high quality presentations and lively debates. In addition, there were plenty of opportunities for informal networking, which many participants found to be quite invaluable. The Forum of National Archivists consolidated the progress that it has made since its inception in 2011 and came of age as a fully effective ICA body. Even the General Assembly, normally a rather dull and routine affair, achieved a respectable attendance and was not without its moments of unexpected drama. Nobody who attended the conference should be in any doubt whatsoever that the event was a milestone in the evolution of ICA as the global network of choice for records and archive professionals. We should proudly proclaim our collective success in Brussels and savour the moment of triumph. However, we must resist the temptation to rest on our laurels and instead prepare for the next challenge looming on the horizon – to maintain the high standard which we set in Brussels at the next Annual Conference in Girona this October.
The Opening Ceremony of the First ICA Annual Conference

The first ICA annual conference opened on Saturday 23 November in the Square Congress Centre in Brussels. Despite the dull weather outside, there was a warm atmosphere inside the Copper Hall, where the opening ceremony and speeches were taking place.

Karel Velle, Director of the General Archives of the Kingdom of Belgium, officially opened this first Annual Conference and introduced Mr. Philippe Courard, Minister of State for Social Affairs, the Family and the Disabled, and Minister of State for Science Policy. After welcoming the conference participants on behalf of the King of Belgium, Mr. Courard commented on the timely nature of the conference themes in the light of the recent cases of international espionage. As Minister of State for Science Policy as well as for Social Affairs, the Family and the Disabled, he was especially aware of questions that touched on personal privacy at a time when the expansion of the digital world was allowing access to more and more information.

Archivists and records managers must always make sure that information is well-managed and one of their missions, along with computer scientists, is to reassure citizens that information is being treated in a transparent and responsible manner. While new technologies must be approached sensitively, they nevertheless allow for innovation within our profession – and he recognized the importance of the role archivists will play in creating the archives of the future.

Mr. Courard finished by saying that following the European model, the State must also play a key role in transparency and the dissemination of and access to information.

Mr. Karel Velle then took the floor. He recalled that it was a long time since Belgium had hosted such an event, and went on to say that few colleagues were really able to keep up with the latest developments in archives owing to the demands of their day-to-day work. That was why this annual conference in Brussels was so important.

Many of us wonder what the future of archives will be like, while remaining convinced that archives services have a very important part to play in the question of accessibility. Digital collaboration can allow us to pool information without taking account of borders – indeed we must react quickly today in response to the demands of the citizen and of current politics.

Martin Berendse, President of ICA, was next to address the conference. He returned to the fact that Belgium had not hosted such an event for a long time – 103 years to be exact. It was in 1910 in Brussels that the very first International Conference of Archivists and Librarians was held. Today more than 500 participants from more than 100 countries were present. This first ICA annual conference was very important because all members of ICA were invited to attend – so that the whole world has the chance to keep abreast of what is happening in the archives sector and to meet colleagues from around the world. For Martin Berendse the questions of preservation and accessibility of records is not only a concern for the immediate future but has an impact on the long term. We are not just serving the citizens of today but future generations too – that is the great challenge for archivists and what makes this conference so exciting.

Céline Fernandez banetceline-travail@yahoo.fr

Opening Ceremony.
Keynote addresses: Archivists urged to play their role

The first keynote address was given by Anne Thurston, Director of the Information and Records Management Trust (IRMT) who spoke on “Archives as the Foundation for Achieving Global Development Goals: Are We Ready to Play Our Role?”

First of all Anne Thurston noted how appropriate the themes of the conference were in the current historical context. Archives are the basis on which the success of development objectives on a global scale rests. Citizens are demanding more openness, democracy and accountability from their governments, wanting the information that they hold to be accessible to all. The transparency revolution has started and we also know that the information and technology revolution will have consequences for archivists and records managers. Our profession will become much more important in a world that is ever more digital and transparent.

But in spite of our great hopes of using information in a more effective way, we haven’t yet properly thought of a way to manage information that prevents citizens doubting its authenticity.

It is important for us to reflect on our role in development on a global scale. The success of many of our objectives depends on the way in which governments manage their information.

The lack of civility in the world owes much to the lack of transparency—and citizens have a growing interest in openness and transparency.

Open data is now viewed as lying at the heart of transparent government, but we need archives if we are to have accountability and transparency. And to be able to hold the government accountable we need to know that the information contained within these archives is precise, reliable and protected by all possible means.

If archives and records are lost, badly organized or inaccessible, accountability is inconceivable.

We must protect the integrity of information so as to confer on it the authority needed and to protect the rights of citizens.

Anne Thurston again emphasized the importance of our profession in meeting government targets: we are the guardians of the proofs necessary for transparency, accountability and openness. We have the key to protect archives and information and make them available to support the needs of the world.
But our profession is not yet considered as a principal player in this field, so we must enhance our communication!

Next Willem Debeuckelaere, President of the Belgian Privacy Commission, presented a paper on “Access to Information and Personal Data Protection”.

Mr Debeuckelaere observed the foresight shown in the choice of the conference themes, especially in the light of the Snowden accusations! He went on to explain the importance of access to archives particularly in the context of scientific research; some research projects would never have taken the turn they did if scientists had not had access to archives. Nevertheless this has been difficult in Belgium, as many services have been unwilling to make their archives accessible for reasons of data protection.

The relationship between privacy and archives is a difficult one and it is essential to establish a dialogue and cooperation between the two. For archivists, the right to forget is a threat, indeed a veritable nightmare: it should never extend to historical and scientific research, which should be exempt. The alternative solution to the destruction of documents is of course professional archives: data protection is fundamental but in no way superior to archival regulation.

We need to be able to discuss and argue this issue – the mission of archivists is to collect data and make it accessible to the public. Archives are the treasury of democracy! Willem Debeuckelaere ended his presentation by saying that Belgian archivists are open to cooperation.

Concluding this decidedly enthusiastic opening session, Alison North, Director of ARMA International, spoke on “Beyond Our Own Borders - Just Who is Accountable and Why does it Matter?”. Alison North defined the role of a speaker as leaving the audience with some points or lines of thought for reflection and discussion, which she would try to do. She then added that it didn’t particularly matter to her whether her personal data was kept for too long.

She restated the main archival principles: integrity, protection, conformity, accessibility, retention, disposal and accountability.

For her, accountability means that each person is responsible for his or her own actions and decisions. Everyone is responsible for information, the delivery of reliable, complete and accessible information – and when no-one thinks he is responsible, the outcome can be fatal.

Alison then explained the role of the records manager which she had during the case of a gas pipe explosion which had caused several deaths.

In common with Anne Thurston and Willem Debeuckelaere, Alison North also laid stress on the fact that archivists and records managers are not well-enough recognized and that we must join forces in order to be heard and to promote our profession. We must inform people and work in collaboration with other professions.

After a few questions, Jean-Philippe Legois, President of the Association of French archivists, reminded archivists that they must participate in the debates on the rights of citizens and fight for them, while Alison North encouraged the archival community to get involved in order to be better known.

It was on this positive note that the archivists headed off for a well-deserved lunch.
ICA granted bursaries to a number of members to allow them to attend the Brussels conference. In return, we asked several of them to write an article explaining what they had gained from the experience and what benefits this has had for their professional life. We publish a selection of the articles below. Please note that the views expressed here are personal and do not necessarily reflect the views of the President and officers of ICA.

Is there transitional justice without archives?

There were several reasons for my wanting to attend the ICA annual conference, with its theme of accountability, transparency and access to archives.

First of all the subject matter of the conference is a current issue in my country which is undergoing a period of transition following the collapse of a dictatorship which, in the manner of dictatorships, used to conceal information.

Secondly I am responsible in my administration for putting in place a records management programme which is based on free access to information.

Finally, in view of the developments in the transmission of information in a global society where the individual is gradually being transformed into a citizen of the world, and taking account of the transition to democracy that several countries, including Tunisia, are living through, such a conference would be very beneficial, especially in addressing the role of archives in truth commissions.

So what did I learn that was new with regard to archives and transitional justice?

During the two parallel sessions on Truth and Reconciliation which I attended, I detected an emphasis on the importance of dealing with the past. To be sure, how you treat the past is not a new theme. In the distant, as well as the more recent, past there have been numerous occasions when humanity has witnessed fragmentation and violence following attempts to re-establish peace and justice.

It is from these more or less positive experiences that certain lessons have been drawn. This was the issue raised in the presentation entitled “Indian Residential Schools, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada”, given by Claude Roberto. What is the role of the archivist? This is the question which calls to mind the sensitive field of activity of transitional justice. How do we fight against impunity?

Every nation has the right to know the truth about past events which have resulted in abuses of human rights, such as the right to personal liberty and security. Knowledge of the history of oppression in a country is part of that country’s historical heritage, which must be protected and preserved by measures that are both adequate and just. Consequently setting up a system to manage the records of the security forces that is accountable is an essential component of the transition to democracy. This is what Elisabeth Baumgartner argued in her paper “The Role of Truth Commission’s Archives in Dealing with the Past”. The objective is to distinguish between truth and knowledge, since archives do not present a truth, but only data.

In the absence of a standard model of dealing with the past, a number of precedents have been established thanks to work carried out by special reporters and experts in the United Nations on the questions of impunity and reparation as well as on good practice in relation to transitional justice. Four areas have been identified in the fight against impunity, namely the right to know, the right to justice, the right to reparation and the guarantee of non-repetition.

In conclusion, some authors have said “there is no administration without archives”, others have said “there is no history without archives”, but might I say “there will be no transitional justice without archives”? -- Adel Maizi

Tunisia
adelmaizi@yahoo.fr
I knew the first ICA Annual Conference “Accountability, Transparency and Access to Information” would offer a great opportunity to meet people from all over the world and share ideas in the field of archives. I thought I would have a unique way to discuss best practice and get first-hand information about new techniques and procedures, and I believe that face to face contact will always be better than online services however good they are. I did, however, use the opportunity to tweet the conference in Spanish so those following it from abroad, especially those who did not speak English, could understand proceedings. It helped that there was simultaneous translation into Spanish, though: for us Latin Americans, however good our English or French, following complex technical discussions in conferences can be difficult.

I attended the session on “Truth and Reconciliation” which really enlightened me about the work I have done on this, safeguarding and enabling access to human rights. It allowed me to meet people from archives in many other countries where human rights violations have occurred. Two other sessions I also attended: “The Tension between Access to Information Rights and Data Protection Rights” and “The Role of the Archivist and Records Manager” gave me so many ideas. I came away even more convinced that archivists have an important role to play in the future in our countries.

But of course, it is often outside the formal sessions that so much work is done and networks built. I made many very useful contacts, and hope that others I met were also glad to meet me and find out about the things we have been doing back in Chile.

During these conversations I was able to explain why I was working in human rights archives and the Memory of the World Programme from UNESCO, about the issues that are still unresolved on bringing real justice to those who were abused, persecuted and assassinated during the years of dictatorships. I have come away with at least one firm invitation to visit another country and share that experience. I met directors of national archives too, from Australia, New Zealand and Chile, and people working and researching in Spain, Korea, Belgium, the Netherlands, Burundi and Uganda. All of them provided fascinating conversations and fuelled me with new ideas. I also enjoyed meeting young archivists from many countries, especially from Africa, talking about their own professional lives and their countries’ situations.

Online congresses are certainly cheaper, and that is important, but there is no substitute for meeting people face to face, knowing who they are when you make contact later, and the ways in which a conversation can turn into a discussion with a group as people join in, taking you into dimensions not available when you and the internet are by yourself in a room. But simply attending, even in person, is not enough either. To get the real benefits you have to make things happen, take the initiative, go beyond the obvious and do not hesitate to approach the people you want to meet. This has been an opportunity to go forward and I am sure I have used it.

Gloria Alberti
Chile
gloria.alberti@gmail.com
I normally look forward to ICA-CITRA for the opportunity it affords me to meet with colleagues in the archival profession, learn about current trends in the presentations, attend training sessions in either records or archives management if available, network, catch up with old professional friends especially from Africa and Europe, make new ones and leave the conference with the prospect of a project or two in the bag for the future. This year’s Conference theme also captured all the current trends in the profession; open government initiative, freedom of information, good governance, accountability and transparency.

Even though I knew funding was going to be a problem I was hopeful, especially as I got an invitation from Margaret Crockett, Deputy Secretary General, Conferences and Congress, asking whether I would be interested in presenting a report on the PARBICA TOOLKIT Workshop that was hosted in Ghana in 2012. It was then that I knew I would definitely be there. Fortunately for me, I saw the ICA Grant announcement on the website, applied with my fingers crossed and got it.

The keynote addresses were by Dr. Anne Thurston, an old mentor and friend of Ghana, Willem Debeuckelaere, President, Belgian Privacy Commission and Alison North, International Director, ARMA International. Ms North opened my eyes to what I should have realized, that every single activity in any country generates records and as such records managers should be open to interaction with any other profession. I know now that utility companies, estate developers, hydrological companies, hospitals etc. are not insular institutions and that their holdings impact on society as a whole, that legal issues are normally resolved with records, and that development and accountability could only be achieved by proper record keeping. I don’t know if am right but it looks as though genetic engineering and DNA mapping all evolved from research into medical records and that as usual access policy is dictated by the greater good, according to the President of the Belgian Privacy Commission.

Of course I gave my report on the PARBICA TOOLKIT and got my African friends asking questions about the TOOLKIT. I listened to Helen Walker’s report on the ICA-Req International Standards for Digital Records Management with a sense of déjà vu since my next project has targeted that aspect of records management. The Freedom of Information and Archival appraisal was an eye-opener about decision-making and the archival profession. The Italian case study confirms our argument that official websites cannot replace Freedom of Information units.

WARBICA met after so many years and we have agreed to meet during the first quarter of 2014. The new Africa Group representative, the Mozambican National Archivist, has started a data base of African members and promised feedback.

My thanks once more to ICA for their financial support, Margaret Crockett for thinking of me and all other colleagues who worked hard to make this first ICA Conference a success.
Some problems in researching colonial archives

The International Council on Archives (ICA) organized its first Annual Conference on 23 and 24 November 2013. The archives world came together in a meeting that was rich in exchanges and cultural diversity. And it’s that very diversity that most prompted me to take part in the conference, but also the richness and variety of the presentations addressing the main theme of this event.

Outside the conference sessions and their wide-ranging discussions, which I attended over the two days, the conference was for me an opportunity to meet and to make contact with a number of colleagues hailing from the four corners of the world. My first contact was with Bob Bobutaka Bateko of the Democratic Republic of Congo who informed me that there had been for some decades a higher institute of training in archival and library studies at the University of Kinshasa where he himself teaches. During the course of my conversations with him, I felt that Bob Bobutaka had a real desire to form partnership links between his own institute and others, whether African (such as EBAD: École de Bibliothécaires, Archivistes et Documentalistes) or European, which specialize in information science. This would be a very good initiative to foster, for such partnerships between training institutions would allow for a pooling of knowledge and a more collective approach to the disciplines of Information and Communication Science.

I was also very pleased to meet the new president of the Association of French Archivists (AAF), Jean-Philippe Legois, who spoke to me about the importance of a greater awareness between national associations of archives professionals which could lead to useful exchanges. He also kindly invited me to attend the study day on 13 December 2013, being organized by the City of Student Memory in partnership with SIAF (Service interministériel des Archives de France), and the Archives nationales.

I found all the subjects tackled in the conference sessions interesting, but of those I attended, the presentation on “Content of Colonial Archives: an Under-Researched Issue”, by Mme Ellen Ndeshi Namhila, Librarian of the University of Namibia, particularly caught my attention. Namibia was originally a German colony before being colonized by South Africa in the time of apartheid. According to Mme Namhila, after decolonization a large number of the more sensitive documents, often made up of individual files, were sent back to the former colonial power, in this case South Africa. She also claims that some records were hidden or destroyed. Therefore any research into the records of the colonial period has to be undertaken in South Africa, where those records are held. This situation contrasts sharply with the archives of the former colonies of French West Africa, which for the most part remained after decolonization in Dakar at the National Archives of Senegal, the regional capital of this territory of the former French Empire.

Finally, my first attendance at this conference has been both a time of professional discovery but also of learning. It has delivered for me a very positive professional outcome.

Ellen Namhila, Mario Ramírez, T-Kay Sangwand, Joel Blanco-Rivera, Katherine Wisser, Trudy Peterson.

Mor Dieye
EBAD, Senegal
mordieye@hotmail.fr
Freedom of Information: a case study

As an archivist by profession, it was my dream come true when I reached Brussels on 22nd November to attend the first ever Annual Conference of ICA as an individual member. Having worked with the National Archives of India since 1977, I have never had an opportunity to attend any of the ICA meetings, which are normally attended by the Head of the Institution. Other senior officers rarely get an opportunity to participate in such events, though I have been actively associated with SWARBICA since 2008-09 and have had the opportunity to attend its various meetings. I enrolled as an individual member of ICA so that I could be directly associated with this international body of archivists and archival experts from all over the world. I had the opportunity to share Indian experiences with other participants from different countries and to discuss how best to replicate practice in India.

The theme of the conference was very challenging and motivated me to contribute a paper based on practice in India, as one of the largest democracies in the world. The ICA Annual Conference provided me with a very big platform to present India as a case study of one of the developing countries who have provided statutory support to the Right to Information Act- 2005. My paper was very well received and also generated a healthy discussion from delegates of those countries that do not have FOIA such as Italy and South Korea.

I was also one of those who were assigned the task of writing our impressions of certain sessions for the ICA website and for Flash.

The most interesting session that I attended was that on Access to Information, and particularly the papers presented by Maria Guercio from Italy, and by Sangmin Lee from Korea, which like Italy does not have FOIA.

In Korea the Mayor of Seoul City has tried to do improve the situation by providing access to information for the consultation of current records as well as archives. Even for archives one had to apply, as under the FOIA they are not available online. Public servants have been very reluctant to disclose their records. Seoul City Government had also been rigid when it came to disclosing information because of records management issues. But now they have begun to improve their records management processes. More access to City information is now possible with a new Mayor and new open government.

The mayor, Mr Park Won-soon, recently announced a major information initiative. Seoul opened a data-sharing forum which has provided online publication of city government meetings since January 2012. The data-sharing website also provides public information to citizens of Seoul. There is a separate website for citizens to file their applications for information online.

By these means, Seoul has been able to increase citizens’ participation. Real time disclosure of information of approved official documents is changing the work environment and changing records management practices. Currently there is no City Archive, which is likely to be established in 2014. But there is no legislation to support these initiatives. South Korea does not have FOIA and despite the innovative measures described above there is little participation by citizens in policy proposal and relatively weak communication. There is concern, with the change of mayor, whether the reforms which have been introduced will continue.

They should continue and the City archives should be established in 2014 to provide archival support to all these initiatives by the current city government.

It was indeed an eye-opening experience and we will look forward to more such international meetings courtesy of ICA to which we will ever remain grateful particularly to its secretariat staff who have been very cooperative and encouraging. Long live ICA.

Dr Meena Gautam
India
meenagtmt@yahoo.co.in

Maria Guercio.

D’ Meena Gautam
India
meenagtmt@yahoo.co.in
ICA Annual Conference 2013: an unforgettable experience

It was a privilege to be able to attend and participate in the inaugural Annual Conference of the International Council on Archives held in Brussels from 23 to 24 November 2013. The chosen theme for the Conference, “Accountability, Transparency and Access to Information” was very relevant given the current challenges faced by archivists and other records professionals in managing records in the digital world. I was also happy to have been awarded a bursary from the ICA that enabled me to travel to Brussels to attend this historic event in the world of archives.

The keynote addresses on the first day of the Conference were high in quality and were a fitting opening to the proceedings. The speakers began by providing some insight into the themes of accountability and transparency in recordkeeping, highlighting the importance of our role as archivists and record-keepers in these issues. The speakers even alluded to the fact that we could actually save lives and protect human dignity when we properly execute this role. The programme selection was interesting, informative and topical covering a range of sub-themes many of which were legal in nature under the main theme.

The panel presentation of which I was a part was jointly prepared by Mrs. Sharon Alexander-Gooding (UWI-Barbados), myself and Dr. Stanley Griffin (UWI-Jamaica). The presentation was well received and participants requested copies of the presentation as reference material.

Ultimately, the first ICA Annual Conference 2013 can be considered a major success which was evidenced by the number of participants who attended from every corner of the globe. I sincerely wish to thank the ICA for this unforgettable experience.

Cherri-Ann Beckles
University of the West Indies, Barbados
cherri-ann.beckles@cavehill.uwi.edu

Sangmin Lee.
For the first Annual Conference of ICA the theme chosen —“Accountability, Transparency and Access to Information”— could hardly have been more timely or apposite. Whether they know it or not, all areas of government and society are now considering record keeping issues. Following the Wiki leaks scandals and the Snowden revelations, it would seem that distrust in politicians and public bodies is now at an all time high. Conference addressed this issue, arguing convincingly that archival and records management professionals are best placed to take centre stage in the process of restoring trust, but only if we have the self-confidence to assume this crucial role.

Over two days, through a mixture of plenary and parallel sessions delegates considered three broad themes and addressed the questions that arose:

- Open government and open data: with the attendant issues of access to Information, Freedom of Information legislation and the debate around privacy and personal data protection. Open data, we learned, could be seen as little more than a smokescreen which does not raise accountability, and is no substitute for a good Freedom of Information Act. But were FoI acts always a good thing? Had they actually muzzled the record rather than opening information to the public? Did the public make use of them, or were they no more than a tool for journalists, with governments restricting material they did not wish to be made available? But where FoI is in place, efficient records management is vital.

- The resulting current challenges to records managers and their role. We were asked to consider whether the profession had really changed substantially. Some argued convincingly that despite the rapid changes in technology the role of the records manager is much the same as it ever was: to give context to the material, to orient users and to streamline information. But now this has to be done while keeping up with ever rapid technological changes.

- Citizen engagement with government and archives. Often our profession finds itself in the middle of two opposing sides in the access v. privacy debate. We thus need to be more accountable ourselves in professional matters such as appraisal to avoid the charge of destroying/falsifying material.

The important messages to take from this conference are that we are key players, but are not necessarily seen as such. We need to position and present ourselves as archivists, records managers, information pioneers or even as change managers. The job title is not important, but it is vital to move out of our comfort zone and reach out to other professions. Galina Dastkovsky summed the current situation up perfectly (after reminding us that data was doubling every 12-18 months), when she noted that information governance was not an end goal, but a journey and that we, the information professionals, were in the driving seat. And that, surely, is where we want to be. After such an excellent and thoroughly inspiring conference, we have no excuse not to position ourselves centre stage, or others will do it for us.

Margaret Turner
Translations and Publications Adviser
turnermargaret@hotmail.com
The city of Girona (Catalonia, Spain) will host the International Conference Archives & Cultural Industries from the 13th to the 15th October next. The event is organized by the International Council of Archives (ICA) and The Municipal Archives of Girona, in collaboration with various local, state and national institutions.

The Conference intends to host presentations from around the world to reflect and debate on the following thematic areas:

- **Cultural and creative industries, and strategies of collaboration with archives**
  Demands and needs.

- **Actions and initiatives**
  Archives in collaboration with the cultural and creative industries sector.

- **Archives and web portals**
  Strategies that have guided their development and proposed future projects.

- **Access to information**
  Limitations and possibilities. Authorship and intellectual property rights on the Internet.

- **Digital repositories and authenticity preservation in the Cloud**
  Planning, management and preservation of large digital repositories.

- **Open Data projects**
  Reuse and exploitation of data and archives.

- **Business models for digital preservation and custody**
  New documentary heritage, new users and new professional services.

- **175th Anniversary of Photography 1839-2014**
  Management, processing and dissemination of photographic and audiovisual heritage in the 21st century.

The scientific programme will include the participation of internationally renowned Keynote Speakers who come from the creative world and are related to disciplines such as music, photography, gastronomy, audiovisuals, literature, etc. Together with the events of the Conference, attendees will have the opportunity to participate in exhibitions and activities organized by various archives and museums of the city and to enjoy a social programme designed to make sure they have a pleasant stay.

The city of Girona

Girona was founded by the Romans 21 centuries ago and has an impressive old town with Romanesque, Gothic and Baroque churches and a beautiful Cathedral. The city also has a very well preserved Jewish Quarter and a large part of its Roman and medieval walls and streets remain intact.

We have seven different museums and ten archives that conserve documentation from the ninth century to the present day.

Girona is one hour north of Barcelona, half an hour from the beaches of the Costa Brava and two hours from the Pyrenees. It’s very well connected by plane (Girona low cost airport and Barcelona airport) and by high speed train.

We will welcome you all in Girona!!

Joan Boadas
I Raset
jboadas@ajgirona.cat
After words of welcome from both our hosts, Mr Patrick Lefèvre (Director-General of the Royal Library of Belgium) and Mr Karel Velle (Director of the General Archives of the Kingdom of Belgium), the first order of business was to formalize the organization and operation of the FAN. Based on an election process that was conducted by the interim FAN Secretariat between September and October 2013, the meeting ratified the FAN Bureau membership of Mr Joel Tembe (Director, Arquivo Histórico de Moçambique) representing the Africa and Arab Countries world region and myself representing the Asia and Oceania world region. I was formally installed as President, with Joel taking on the role of FAN Secretary.

The FAN’s role is defined in article 15 of the ICA constitution. It “meets within the framework of the ICA Annual Conference and develops high level strategic responses to the contemporary challenges of managing archives”. This is, quite properly, a very open-ended description and the inaugural meeting therefore spent some time to sharpen the definition of the role and function of the group, and in particular to ensure that it would operate for the benefit of FAN members and contribute something of value to the entire membership of the ICA.

Two key questions were posed – what form should the “strategic responses” take; and what were the “contemporary challenges” of most importance?

The forum was strongly of the view that if the group was to be a valuable part of the ICA, it had to produce tangible outcomes – products or activities that are accessible, useful tools to develop important capabilities, enhance the standing of our institutions and develop our profession. The discussion produced many ideas, including:

- Model legislation or policies relevant to the management of Archives;
- White papers on emerging technological or policy areas;
- Position papers on Archival issues;
- Advocacy with Governments and International Bodies;
- Influencing the ICT industry; and
- Seminars, Webinars.

The FAN had a lively discussion on the contemporary challenges that we face as a group. Not surprisingly, with so many National Archives represented and at a time of unprecedented change in the area of records and information management we quickly gathered up a substantial list of pressing issues. To mention just a few:

- Legislation and legal reforms needed to address developments such as digital record keeping; copyright of archival material; open government; data protection;
- Providing efficient, effective and equitable access services to digital information;
- Managing the authenticity of digital records;
- Proper governance and long term management of email;
- Cooperation and collaboration of national archivists; for example to support the transition to digitization;
- Streamlining and harmonization of standards; and development of guidelines for the application and use of standards;
- Classification and declassification of sensitive records and information holdings;
- International officer exchange programme; and
- Implementation guidelines and training program for the ICA “Principles of Access”.

The FAN devoted some discussion to our relationship with ICA – how we fit within the broader governance framework and how we combine our particular strengths to generate real value for all ICA members. It was generally agreed that FAN should take responsibility to determine for itself the issues for discussion and the program of activities to be pursued, while reporting to the ICA Executive Board to ensure at all times that the FAN is conducting itself in a manner entirely consistent with...
the values of the ICA. On this point, it is also clearly articulated in the ICA Constitution that the FAN will seek Executive Board approval prior to the use of ICA resources in any program or activity. Other communication channels were also suggested, including a regular FAN report to the General Assembly and presentations at annual conferences.

The Forum benefited from three excellent presentations. ICA President Martin Berendse provided a strategic overview of major international information policy issues – such as data protection, open government, open data and access – and the central role that National Archivists should be playing in our respective jurisdictions to ensure that our contributions are recognized. Dr John Bannon, Chair of the National Archives of Australia Advisory Council and former Premier of South Australia, gave a presentation on Open Government; in particular how it is viewed by the political leadership and the issues that National Archivists should take on if they are to be seen as relevant and essential by government. Jaime Antunes da Silva, Director-General of the National Archives of Brazil, shared Brazil’s experience in the introduction of public data access laws and described the solutions developed around highly complex issues of government accountability, personal privacy, national security and declassification of sensitive documents.

Following the meeting, Jaime kindly agreed to join the FAN Bureau representing the world region of Latin America and the Caribbean.

I found the inaugural FAN meeting to be stimulating, provocative, surprising and immensely valuable. It is however just the beginning.

The Brussels meeting laid some foundations for FAN – it established some ground rules, formalized our governance and accumulated lists of possible ideas to take forward. There is now plenty of work for the FAN Bureau to be getting on with and I look forward to reporting significant progress when we next meet in Girona.
In 2010, the Section for Archival Education and Training (ICA-SAE) of the ICA embraced the challenge of creating an interactive, online, multilingual archival terminology resource.

The project was led by Luciana Duranti at the University of British Columbia, and was funded by ICA and InterPARES. In the initial stage of the project, the research team (composed of the ICA-SAE members) chose 300 core archival concepts and identified the corresponding terms in English-speaking countries. This exercise produced 320 English terms. Afterwards, a team composed of archival students at the master’s and doctoral level and professional/academic supervisors identified the definitions for the English terms as used in several English-speaking countries. Definitions were drawn from standard authorities in each language/country, where such.

In March 2012, the Project was completed and delivered to the ICA for publication and interactive use on the Internet. Since 1 August 2013 it has been available as a reference tool for professional archivists and researchers as ICA Multilingual Archival Terminology at: www.ica.org/14282/multilingual-archival-terminology/multilingual-archival-terminology.html

The languages now available are: Catalan, Chinese, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish and Swedish. Croatian will soon be added. After InterPARES has added interactive functionalities, the ICA Multilingual Archival Terminology will offer ICA members the opportunity to add languages, terms and definitions.

The ICA-SAE/InterPARES Multilingual Archival Terminology Project

ICA-SAE Multilingual Archival Terminology was originally proposed to support a concurrent project: the ICA-SAE Education Modules, Digital Records Pathways: Topics in Digital Preservation, also funded by the ICA and InterPARES. Eight modules were completed in 2012 and made available for download at www.ciscra.org.

The Multilingual Archival Terminology project began with a core set of terms based on concepts expressed in previous ICA dictionaries and InterPARES glossaries, chosen by the Project Director Luciana Duranti, and approved by the ICA-SAE. The initial work of identification of corresponding terms in each language/region was done by a team that consisted of graduate students (native speakers of each language) at the University of British Columbia’s School of Archives Library and Information Studies, expert professionals from several national archives, and archival scholars from leading universities in each country/region. Definitions were drawn from standard authorities in each language/country, where such.
Although it was initiated with 320 English terms conveying internationally shared concepts, which were then interpreted in several other languages, the result is a resource that does not give preference to one language, regional variation or tradition over another, but presents terms and definitions as they are used by records professionals where they live and work. This is no easy task, as some of the languages represented simply do not have equivalents for all the concepts expressed by the English terms or for the terms themselves. In many of these cases, the terms and definitions have been translated from a standard English language source (ICA or InterPARES being the sources of choice where possible).

The ICA-SAE / InterPARES Project members gratefully acknowledge and thank all those in the large team who have so far contributed to ICA Multilingual Archival Terminology. In particular, we wish to thank Giorgio Mammarella, database and web designer, whose work enables the flexibility and usability of this resource. All who have worked on this project hope that many more will contribute, extending the terms and the languages included so that it becomes an indispensable resource for our present and future professional community.

Methodology

Archival work has different traditions and different cultural backgrounds – a simple translation of terms will not suffice to understand what colleagues from different countries are doing. We need to see their reality through their eyes and understand it through their expertise, which is manifested in the way they use archival terminology: we can begin to do that by linking across languages and regions terms and definitions conveying shared concepts as they are used in each language and region.

Thus, the goal of ICA Multilingual Archival Terminology is to reflect, as much as possible, national/regional archival traditions and usage through the choice and definition of terms.
Professional Programme Matters: news from PCOM

When he was made an ICA fellow in August 2012, Lew Bellardo, the out-going Vice-President Programme, was asked what the most significant achievements of ICA had been over the past few years. He said “the development and adoption of professional tools that can be used in a variety of language and cultural settings.” It is time to take the tool and product development activity of ICA to a new level so that the tools are not just in response to practitioners’ needs but rather in anticipation of those needs.

The Programme Commission (PCOM) which began a new cycle in 2013 under Henri Zuber, has an extensive and ambitious remit over all professional activity of ICA Sections, Branches and Expert Groups as well as encompassing Annual Conference and Congress programme development and partnership work. Almost all of ICA’s work in supporting the membership and in advocating archives and records management to the outside is of relevance to PCOM. It has huge responsibilities but is also uniquely placed to develop and implement a successful strategy to continue to deliver more and better products and to ensure that they are the result of combined and integrated efforts which maximise the efficiency and capacity of the ICA network.

PCOM meets twice a year but there is a lot of email correspondence in between. The big meeting is in the spring, just before the Executive Board meets, and it is the meeting that sees the greatest development and creativity in the professional programme, since there is more time to debate and discuss on-going matters and new directions. At the time of the Annual Conference, there is less time to discuss, so that meeting tends to be more of a round-up and reporting session.

PCOM always has the Annual Conferences and Congress on its agenda. 2013 saw ICA’s first Annual Conference, with competitive paper selection and open to all members to attend. Its title was “Accountability, Transparency and Access to Information” and Henri Zuber was Chair of the Programme Committee which included four PCOM members who played very active roles in reviewing and selecting the presentations for the final programme. The overwhelmingly positive response to the call for papers and participation levels of around 500 people, demonstrate that the topic was well-chosen – and possibly that the Programme Commission needs to devote more resource to information governance and records management issues.

The cycle of conferences is unbroken and PCOM constantly has them all in its sights. The VP Programme and Deputy Secretary General, Conferences, started working with Joan Boadas I Raset, who will be hosting the 2014 Annual Conference in Girona, already in 2012. It takes place from the 11th to 15th October 2014 and the theme is “Archives and Cultural Industries”. A Programme Committee has been established and the call for papers has been launched.

Going forward, at the time of writing the venue and subject for the 2015 Annual Conference have not been decided, but when the time comes PCOM will be well-placed to advise on a theme that is both relevant to the host country and region as well as being integral to ICA’s professional programme aims and strategy. The 2016 Congress will be in Seoul, South Korea and this coming year PCOM will oversee the establishment of the Programme Committee.
PCOM has been constituting new expert groups to increase involvement and participation within ICA and to establish a respected source of information and expertise on a range of professional issues. In addition to the existing groups on archival description, audio-visual records and human rights records issues, experts on digital records, archival buildings and emergency response are beginning to work together in this way. 2014 will see the inception of expert groups for records management, appraisal, advocacy and legal issues. Each expert group will have a PCOM member as a liaison.

PCOM has, for many years now, provided project funding to ICA members who demonstrate the value of their proposed project to ICA strategic goals, the wider membership and PCOM’s own aims. This year several existing projects came to fruition; for example we saw the ICA-Req training and implementation tools launched at the Annual Conference as well as delivery of an e-book, “the Recordkeepers’ Toolkit”. The 2013 call process, under the slightly revised criteria focusing on larger, more strategic projects, resulted in three funded and two endorsed projects. Funding was also awarded to the MAST project – an innovative mobile app which provides resources to support records management in low-resource environments.

PCOM also has an important role to play in the development of productive and viable partnerships for ICA. This past year saw a renewal of the long-standing relationship with the International Records Management Trust. The VP Programme has been advising the Secretary General on development of two pilot modules for the Digital Recordkeeping Curriculum project which began under the aegis of UNESCO. The project aims to provide records professionals with the skills and knowledge to enable digital records preservation issues to be addressed effectively in a variety of records-generating environments and to design, establish and manage digital preservation programmes that are relevant and effective. The two pilot modules (“Understanding Digital Records Preservation Initiatives” and “Managing Metadata for Protecting the Integrity of Digital Records”) have been drafted and members of the newly constituted Expert Group for Digital Records had time to swing into action and review them.

Based on the three Programme strands (Preservation and Emergency Planning, Digital Recordkeeping and Good Governance), PCOM is moving forward with the creation of the expert groups and the rationalization of the projects ICA invests in and develops. 2014 will be the year when these new developments will come to fruition.

Margaret Crockett
Deputy Secretary General of ICA,
Programme
crockett@ica.org

"Comma"

The next issue of *Comma* (2012:1), a special issue on Government Recordkeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa, should have now arrived on members’ desks. It brings together new writing on government recordkeeping in sub-Saharan Africa, including colonial and post-colonial administrative histories, analyses of the capacity of national archives to deliver recordkeeping services, examinations of the introduction of digital systems to government work and, finally, reflections on broader issues of good governance, accountability, and archival solidarity. The issue, has been produced together with Mr James Lowry, Deputy Director of the International Records Management Trust (IRMT) in the United Kingdom.

In 2014 members should receive two issues containing a representative selection of papers given at the 2012 Brisbane Congress.

Looking forward, the Editorial Board is working on an open issue resulting from the general call for papers made through the ICA listserv and website. Selection of articles for this issue has again been a difficult task given the number and quality of the papers submitted. Much of the work on the open issue, and on the Brisbane Congress issues, took place at the editorial board meeting held in Brussels in November 2013, at the kind invitation of the State Archives in Belgium.

Finally colleagues are reminded that *Comma* articles dating between 2004 and 2012 are freely available to download via the ICA member login.

Margaret Procter
*Comma* Editor in Chief
m.procter@liverpool.ac.uk
The FIDA Board of Trustees met in Brussels on 22 November, prior to the opening of the annual conference. The main part of the agenda was to discuss the 23 proposals for funding received in the 2013 call for projects.

Once again the call attracted a wide-ranging list of development proposals from regions around the world including Africa, South America, Central and Eastern Europe, the Pacific, South-East Asia and the Middle-East, demonstrating a significant and continuing demand for this work. The list of successful applications includes Cambodia, Cameroon, Lebanon, Mozambique and islands in the Pacific; additional consideration will be given to those requiring further review at the Virtual Meeting of the Trustees in March 2014. Without additional funding, however, it is unlikely any more can be funded this year. Therefore the critical item on the agenda of the FIDA Board meeting in November was the question of raising funds for those archivists who need to develop their skills and their archival capacity in low-resourced countries. It is evident that FIDA needs to be able to raise funds on a much larger scale than it is currently able to do in order to secure its future; at present it has sufficient funds to allow for only one more funding round. Without more funding, FIDA will cease to operate from next year. This would be a major setback for low-resourced countries, since FIDA provides a lifeline in supporting a variety of development projects in the areas of archives and records management that many more fortunate countries take for granted. It is important to stress that these funds are contributions to sustainable development projects with long-term benefits. FIDA will not fund a project in its entirety, nor does it fund the normal everyday work of an archival institution. Rather it provides seed-corn funding to help archives to develop themselves and to attract other sources of funding, and is thus able to target a relatively small investment towards maximum result.

Those of you who attended the Brussels Conference may recall Trustees armed with buckets collecting donations after the FIDA session. This raised 500 euros and we warmly thank those members who generously contributed. However, FIDA seeks to award up to 25,000 euros each year to support projects, and therefore needs to recoup at least an equivalent sum each year if its work is to continue. The Trustees are at present examining a number of options that would put FIDA’s fund-raising on a more permanent footing. In the meantime we would be grateful for any support members might wish to give, especially if it is on a regular basis. You can do this by indicating on your ICA subscription form that you wish to give a donation to FIDA when you renew your subscription or download the donation form from www.ica.org/12243/donate-to-fida/donate-to-fida.html. The Trustees would also be pleased to hear from you if you have ideas about raising funds for the important work that FIDA undertakes. In the last edition of Flash, the Secretary General wrote: “FIDA is about real life projects that have an immediately positive impact on the ground. In many ways, FIDA is the most important expression of our professional solidarity.” As members of ICA, please help in any way you can. FIDA really does need you.