



ICOM-SA Office :  
3 Davann Court, 50 Bellair Road,  
Vredehoek, Cape Town, 8001  
Phone +27 461 2315.  
Email : [icomsamuseums@gmail.com](mailto:icomsamuseums@gmail.com)  
084-811 NPO

## ICOM-SA Newsletter 1, March 2014

The ICOM-SA Executive Board has committed itself to improved communication between the Board and the ICOM-SA members. We therefore launch this *Newsletter* as one of the initiatives to honour this commitment. The *Newsletter* will mainly serve as a communication tool between the ICOM-SA Executive Board and members and will consist mainly of announcements. We are also developing a new website and facebook page that will become the main vehicle for members to communicate with each other and to create opportunities for discussion. The website and facebook page are still in the planning phase and we will let you know as soon as they are up and running.

It is with great sadness that we have to announce that the ICOM-SA Office is being downsized due to financial constraints. Marianne Gertenbach will continue to manage membership administration on a voluntary basis. The Executive Board would like to express our appreciation to Marianne for her continued enthusiasm and dedication.

The Executive Board members are hard at work on the strategic plan for 2013-2016 as well as the operational plan for the forthcoming year. We will provide more information once the draft documents are ready for comment and input.

Helene Vollgraaff  
Chairman

## Meet the ICOM-SA Executive Board

**Helene Vollgraaff** studied political science at the University of Stellenbosch and UNISA, specialising in new social movements with a focus on ecologism. Though not working in political studies, she remains interested in social relationships and most of her work in museums focuses on political history and contemporary culture. Helene started at the SA Cultural History Museum, now part of Iziko Museums of South Africa and remained there for 17 years. She is currently employed as a Heritage Policy Specialist at the National Heritage Council where she continues to pursue her interest in museums, including museums as media and collecting practices.

Helene has a long involvement in ICOM-SA as well as SAMA. She served as Secretary/Treasurer of the Interim ICOM-SA Board after the organisation was re-established in South Africa in 2006. She continued to serve ICOM-SA as Secretary/Treasurer in the first elected Executive Board of 2007-2010. As ICOM-SA Chair, she would like to bring the principles of the political philosophy of ecologism, with its emphasis on equality, inclusiveness, interdependence, respect for all and sustainability, to ICOM-SA.

**Ann Wanless's** first permanent job was in the Campbell Collections of the University



*Ann Wanless, Luthando Maphasa, Sylvia van Zyl, Hamish Robertson and Helene Vollgraaff  
Absent: Catherine Snel*

of Natal, a collection she describes as a wonderful combination of library, archive and museum collections. She had a degree in English and Speech and Drama and was studying librarianship at the time. However, it was the ethnographic collections where she knew she belonged. Ann started to study anthropology part-time, and applied to work at the Africana Museum in Johannesburg where she stayed for almost 15 years, enjoying every part of museum work, but most especially the luxury and privilege of being able to handle and study the objects. After she left the museum she completed a PhD on the Fourie collection of Khoisan material, and she worked part-time as consultant or volunteer in some of the collections of Johannesburg. Being part of the ICOM team keeps her in the museum network not only in South Africa but in the world – and she loves it. As Treasurer, Ann has taken on the work to review the financial

practices and to improve financial reporting to members.

**Hamish Robertson** has worked at the South African Museum, now part of Iziko Museums of South Africa, for more than 25 years. Initially he was Head of the Entomology Department and later Head of the Life Sciences Division. Under Iziko, he has been Director of Natural History Collections for more than 10 years. His research interest is in the ecology and systematics of ants. As Director he has been involved in managing natural history research, collections, exhibitions and websites. Hamish has a special interest in creating access to information through the digitization of collections and using the internet for showing the connectivity of knowledge. He is also interested in finding ways of empowering marginalised people through knowledge and skills transfer. On the ICOM-SA committee he is currently involved in finding a more sustainable and dynamic way of managing and updating the website and social media so that they are cheap to run and kept up to date with current news and information.

Sylvia van Zyl and Luthando Maphasa are responsible for membership and project support.

**Sylvia van Zyl** has worked in the Eastern Cape Museums for the past 35 years. Her initial service at the Albany Museum Grahamstown was in Museum Education. At the Port Elizabeth Museum she expanded into Public Programmes and ultimately landed up in management.

Since June 2011, Sylvia has been focused on Education and Training in a very broad sense, namely, providing educational and training support about museums and museum work to employees, trustees, government officials and communities. This has led to participation in policy formulation in the Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture of the Eastern Cape. Museum Ethics and Standards have been an ongoing focus of interest for Sylvia and for this reason she will be carrying the banner of Ethics for the current term of office of the ICOM-SA Board.

Sylvia will be exploring ways to promote membership of ICOM-SA to a wider group of individuals and institutions in South Africa. She plans on compiling a guideline for new members to assist them in making their membership meaningful and productive. Furthermore, she will be appealing to members to assist in some of the projects on the Strategic Plan. In doing so, younger members can move into the centre of the issues that face the museum collective and even assist in convening meetings in their regions around the IMD themes of the next three years.

**Luthando Maphasa** has worked for the KwaZulu-Natal Museum (formerly Natal Museum) since 2003. Before then he worked for the National Zoological Gardens, SANParks, SABS, Joburg City Parks and the University of Natal (now UKZN). Luthando is a natural scientist with a keen interest in the socio-economic aspects of conservation. He has undertaken research studies that address

the benefits of community involvement in conservation. Since he joined the KwaZulu-Natal Museum, he has worked hard to promote an understanding and involvement of young people in the research, conservation and promotion of South African heritage.

Luthando has served on various committees in both the arts and science sectors. He also serves as a board member of various public and private sector institutions. He had been a member of the South African Museums Association (SAMA) before joining the ICOM-SA Board. He hopes to use his position to promote research in museums, especially the role of applied research in museums as a way to promote the relevance of museums in addressing national government priorities.

**Catherine Snel** serves on the ICOM-SA Executive Board in her capacity as President of SAMA. An objective shared by the ICOM-SA Executive Board and the SAMA Council is to build a strong supportive relationship between the two organisations. Representatives of the two bodies met in October 2013 in Kimberley and a formal MOU is being prepared.

Catherine studied at the University of Stellenbosch and started working in the museum sector in 2001 when she joined the Sasol Art Museum in Stellenbosch. There she worked extensively on the cultural collections, as well as being involved in exhibitions, documentation and conservation, networking with

schools and museums, and assisting the public with information.

In 2002, Catherine relocated to Oudtshoorn, where she managed the Cango Caves Interpretive Centre. Since 2004, she has been employed by The Afrikaans Language Museum in Paarl, where her work includes curation, heritage programmes, educational and outreach programmes.

### **ICOM appoints a new Director-General**

Dr Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine has been appointed Director General. She will take up her function officially on 1 May, 2014. Prior to this period, she will work with Ms Hanna Pennock, the Acting Director General, to ensure a smooth transition while maintaining close relations with ICOM's partners. Hanna Pennock has done great work during the last year to create a flatter, more accessible structure within the ICOM Secretariat. The Secretariat is now organised into eight units who work together closely: Administration; Communication and Publications; Documentation; Finance and Human Resources; Legal Affairs; Membership; Organisation and Information Systems; and Programmes and Partnerships.

Dr Anne-Catherine Robert-Hauglustaine has a Ph.D. in the History of Science and Technology from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris, France. She is currently Deputy Director of the Jardin des Sciences of the University

of Strasbourg in France and Vice-President of European Science Event Association (Eusea). She worked for nearly 10 years at the Musée des Arts et Métiers in Paris, France, notably as the Director of the Exhibitions and Publications Department from 2000 to 2007 and as Editor-in-Chief of the museum's magazine from 2001 to 2008. Her longtime dedication to ICOM and to the international museum community goes back 15 years when she served as an ex-officio member on the Executive Board of ICOM's National Committee in France. During her term as board member (2007-2010), then chairperson (2010-2013) of ICOM's International Committee for Exhibition Exchange (ICEE), Dr Robert-Hauglustaine was involved in various international exhibition projects. She is currently an Associate Professor at the University Paris 1 – Sorbonne.

### **Addressing illicit trafficking**

The ICOM Secretariat has initiated a programme to fight Illicit Trafficking. This, ICOM's **International Observatory on Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods**, is a three year programme aiming to:

- Improve monitoring methods, data gathering and scientific research
- Provide information and data for international public understanding and policy orientation
- Provide a space for dialogue, discussion & mutual understanding for key organisations
- Motivate the exchange of good practices, techniques and methods between concerned parties

- Reinforce collaboration between stakeholders for the development of instruments and practices
- Identify and respond better to the needs in terms of training and capacity-building
- Identify and promote national and international normative and practical instruments
- Raise awareness of governments, IOs, NGOs, and the general public on the issue
- Encourage all state parties to improve and develop methods and tools.

The main focus during the current year will be on creating a website and information network while the development of better practices and a solid cooperative framework will be addressed in the medium and long-term.

Locally, ICOM-SA and the National Forum for the Law Enforcement of Heritage Related Matters (NALEH) have agreed to collaborate and are in the process of entering a partnership.

**NALEH** brings together the Arts & Culture and Law Enforcement sectors to fight cultural crime. The NALEH Committee consists of representatives of both the public and private sector with an interest in fighting cultural crime. These include the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigations (DPCI) of SAPS, SA Customs Administration, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), Interpol, South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), the National Heritage Council (NHC), the

South African Museums Association (SAMA) and the South African National Committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM-SA). NALEH has no secretariat and depends on the support of the constitutive organisations.

The objectives of NALEH are to:

- Facilitate cooperation between Arts & Culture and the Law Enforcements sectors, whether public or private, to fight cultural crime.
- Create awareness of the international conventions and agreements as well as national legislation and policies pertaining to cultural crime
- Make policy recommendations to government on behalf of the stakeholders regarding cultural crime
- Gather and disseminate information regarding stolen objects
- Develop information sources and guidelines for interested and affected parties to fight cultural crime.
- Provide training to the Arts & Culture and Law Enforcement sectors as well as Customs Officials to identify and fight cultural crime

### **Membership fees and renewals**

Membership fees are paid in Euro. Although the Euro fee has remained unchanged, the membership fees have increased significantly due to the

weakening ZAR. In the past, the Board had made a “safe” guess regarding the ZAR – Euro exchange rate and calculated membership fees accordingly. However, the exchange rate is too volatile at the moment to continue this practice. In order to keep membership fees as low as possible, we decided to review the membership fees every 3 months, rather than implementing a high rate from the beginning. Currently, membership fees are calculated on an exchange rate of R15.00 to the Euro. Unfortunately, the Euro is already costing more than R15.00 and unless this trend changes, membership fees will be increased in April. We therefore urge all members to renew membership as soon as possible.

In the same breath, we urge institutional members to review their category. The institutional categories are based on the operational budget of the institution in Euro. Therefore, with the weakening ZAR, it is very possible that institutional members may fall in a lower category than previous years.

### **Finances and Sponsorships**

As in the case of so many similar organisations, financial sustainability is an ongoing concern for ICOM-SA. It should be noted that 90% of the membership fees are paid to the parent body with the remaining 10% providing the main income for the operation of ICOM-SA. We are therefore grateful to all who support ICOM-SA in its work.

The **National GeoScience Museum**, Pretoria hosted the ICOM-SA Board meeting in December 2013. The National GeoScience Museum was established in 1897 with its doors being opened to the public for the first time in 1905. The museum has one of the larger mineral collections in the world, with over 9000 specimens on display out of a total of approximately 26000 under curation. Also on display is a piece of the moon rock, a large selection of South African meteorites and extensive exhibitions of vital economic minerals. Other highlights

include an upgraded display of the National Geoscience Museum Gemstone Collection with examples from around the world and a unique collection explaining systematic mineralogy.

We are grateful for the hospitality and generosity of Kholisile Nzolo and his team.

We also want to acknowledge the support of Iziko Museums of South Africa and the KwaZulu-Natal Museum who sponsored Hamish and Luthando's travel costs to attend the Board meeting.