

Notes May 2011

Membership

Business as Usual and New Business

CASCA membership management duties underwent a few changes in 2010-2011.

Business as Usual

Communication between myself and the Wilfred Laurier Press (with Cheryl Beaupre), continues to be excellent. C.B. is very helpful and professional.

In January 2011, renewal notices were sent out to the 2010 members, and 2009 members who had not registered for 2010. There was a good response to these e-mails (as there was in previous years), witnessed by the high number of membership registrations received in the days and weeks following the delivery of the notices. The inclusion of the registration form LINK in the renewal notices seems crucial to the high rate of response. In fact, each time that I am in contact with someone whose registration is out of date, I suggest that they renew their membership and I include this link in the e-mail. I think it promotes people to register and do so right away. There were some problems with the new registration forms, however, which made this normally easy process a little more difficult this year.

New Business

In the autumn we terminated our registration system contract with Leverus and started a new relationship with the CFHSS (the Fed).

Despite having the Fed registration system, we could keep the Paypal system open because it has proven useful under some payment circumstances, when invoicing is required. We use it for situations like those of banquet ticket sales.

The multiple year membership categories are a moderate success. As of March 31st we have 14 people registered in these categories. Given that processing of these registrations causes me no extra work and given our problem with lapsing memberships, any registrations in these categories are gains.

Membership fees have been raised. I haven't had any complaints.

The new e-journal registration form check box has been a great success. In 2010, 6 people wrote to me to ask that they not receive paper versions of the journal. In 2011, people were able to simply click a check box on the registration form to let me know that they don't want journals, to date (March 31st) 42 people have done so. Evidently this is a choice that people wanted. I believe that this must save CASCA some expense (journal printing, postage)? I send these people a bulk email when the Press sends out the journals so that e-journal people know to look for their Anthropologica on-line. **Should we have a link to our on-line journal for these people? Is this complicated/expensive/unnecessary effort for nothing?**

The membership registration form Salisbury donation box has been slightly altered. Before people could only choose to donate preset amounts (\$25, \$50, etc). Now donors can choose their own dollar values. On March 31st, \$700 has been donated for 2011. In 2010 \$890 was donated for the whole year.

Donations made as sustaining memberships amounts are not included in this discussion.

We've had some problems with the Fed system.

-Some programming errors have led to 'dropped' registrations or payments. This problem has been fixed as of March 31st – except one small glitch that appears close to being solved.

-As with Leverus, double registrations still sometimes go through. The Fed is working on ways to minimise this. They've had success with their efforts but still there are a few doubles. Hopefully we can eliminate these completely. Meanwhile, I am now comparing the IATS system (credit card payment system) versus the registration system to be sure the two match.

-The March 31st Renewal reminder: Fed programming error, has now been fixed, but quite the task to answer all the emails (70 of them) that came in because of this!

-aspects of the system are not very intuitive, the welcome page, for example. Too many people are finding the username/password box confusing. I am working with the Fed on this, but unfortunately some of the changes we want are not under our control. Hopefully we can work to have a more user-friendly page by next registration season. I believe we have lost about 5-10 registrants because of this , not good.

-the registration sheets do not work with Macs/Safari browser. The Fed is trying to fix this.

Generally speaking, despite all these problems, the Fed people have been very helpful and responsive. Also, the system is much better, in many ways, than the old Leverus one.

Customising the sheets is much easier, for example. I get email notices when people register, etc.

Lapsing Memberships, Membership Figures

Lapsing memberships continue to be a big problem for us. Lapsing memberships seem to be linked to the conference - many of the people who sign up for membership do so mainly because this is a requirement for conference attendance. It is very important, then, that the conference is well attended each year.

Final membership numbers

2005 - **374**

2006 - **652** (registration period was 16 months, corrected to 12 months, the value is **489**)

2007 - **605**

2008 - **543**

2009 - **529**

2010 - **523**

As of March 31st we had 282 names on our 2011 membership list. On the same date of 2010 there were 427 registrants.

Final conference numbers

2007 – **438** joint AES
2008 – **376**
2009 – **401** joint AES
2010 – **328** CFHSS

Breakdown of membership categories/income

2006 (**16 month registration period**): TOTAL: 652 members, 35010\$

12 family=\$1500
294 students=\$8820
9 post-doc=\$270
275 regular=\$22000
22 retired=\$660
32 unwaged=\$960
8 sustaining=\$800

2007: TOTAL: 605 members, 31575\$

9 family=\$1125
278 students=\$8340
241 regular=\$19280
31 post-doc=\$930
17 retired=\$510
20 unwaged=\$600
6 sustaining=\$600
+3 WLP subscription transfers (\$190)

2008: TOTAL: 543 members, \$27695

7 family=\$875
264 students=\$7920
212 regular=\$16960
21 post-doc=\$630
20 retired=\$600
17 unwaged=\$510
2 sustaining=\$200

2009: TOTAL: 529 members, \$26155

9 family=\$1125
227 students=\$6810
196 regular=\$15680
35 post-doc=\$1050
14 retired=\$420
19 unwaged=\$570
5 sustaining=\$500

2010: TOTAL: 523 members, \$26805
3 family=\$375
239 students=\$7240
203 regular=\$16280
28 post-doc=\$840
18 retired=\$540
23 unwaged=\$700
8 sustaining=\$800
1emerita=\$30

2011 (to March 31st – **fee increase/3-Yr categories added**): TOTAL: 282 members, \$21640
0 family=\$0
110 students=\$4380
98 regular=\$9740
10 3-yr regular=\$3000
17 post-doc=\$660
20 retired=\$800
18 unwaged=\$710
4 sustaining=\$475
5 3-yr sustaining=\$1875
0 emerita=\$0

The 2010 figures are similar to those of 2009, although they lag behind the 2007 and 2008 numbers. Maybe the economic downturn at the end of 2008 is to blame? The 2011 figures are very low. The AAA conference in Montreal, Autumn 2011 seems to be the cause of this fall in membership.

Membership – to be considered

-Should I be creating a membership manual? A manual could include important contact information and some basic information about what I do and instructions on how to do it. If I get hit by a bus tomorrow, what would happen?

To be considered:

- 1. Where to store this manual? Exec Google site?**
- 2. Cost of creating it? I estimate 5 hours of my time.**
- 3. Maintenance? It could be updated each year at the same time that I create my yearly report. I don't predict that this would be too time-consuming – approximately 1 hour/year.**

-I have noticed that many (most?) Canadian University websites either don't mention CASCA at all (though they often make mention of the AAA) or have outdated links to our website (I noticed this while browsing for the survey). As part of my membership duties, should I spend a bit of time each month/year browsing the university sites to be sure they contain current CASCA information and contacting webmasters when they don't?

-In March, someone wrote to ask me if we offer a ‘lifetime’ membership. We don’t and I don’t even know what this kind of membership normally involves (what is included? fee to charge? how to handle it as membership clerk?). I notice that the Fed registration system does have the possibility of having this kind of membership in their system – we currently don’t use this feature in the system. Would you like me to look into this and report back to the executive in case we want to offer this kind of membership in the future?

Conference Registration and Payment Management

CASCA10

CASCA10 had lower registration than previous years’ conferences. Curiously, 2010 membership didn’t fall?

2007 – **438** joint AES
2008 – **376**
2009 – **401** joint AES
2010 – **328** CFHSS

We lost some registrants due to registration with other societies at the joint conference. Also, a few people managed to participate without registering. The CFHSS handled the conference registration so we could not nag as efficiently as usual.

CASCA11

2011 conference registration is very low. The AAA conference in Montreal, Autumn 2011 seems to be the cause of this fall in numbers.

Future Conference - to be considered

As CRPM I manage the conference registration list and forward it to the LOC on a regular basis. I think this system functions smoothly. The LOC doesn’t have to fumble around with big unwieldy lists with which they have little familiarity, and I spend less time answering LOC questions. The LOC maintain a list of submitters and forward it to me on a regular basis. Because both the LOC and the CRPM have access to updated/corrected lists everyone can better answer registrants’ questions in a prompt fashion. There are few instances of registrants’ e-mails inquiries being shuttled back and forth in an attempt to answer simple questions.

As CRPM, I nag non-registrants to register for both membership and the conference (as needed). The LOC submitter list lets me know who should be nagged. The conference registration list gives the LOC important information on banquet and luncheon attendance.

Would it be a good idea to add the conference abstract submission sheet to the conference registration page?

Potential benefits:

- I don't have to wait for weekly submission reports from the LOC in order to perform my nagging duties
- submitters will have no choice but to register for the conference in order to submit an abstract
- less duplication of information input for participants
- less back and forth between LOC and myself (now we each send a list once a week, with this new system, one list will go in one direction only).
- increased life expectancy for Michel

Potential problems:

- lovely graphics, like that on the top of this year's sheets would not be possible.
- is it possible to add all that content into the conference registration sheet (titles, abstracts, equipment needs, individual proposal versus round-table versus symposium versus visual presentation, etc) in a way that makes registration/submission easier for participants, and gives us a neat spreadsheet that is easy enough to handle? Research is needed; input is required from Michel Bouchard, this year's LOC, Karli and the Fed registration people.
- the LOC would still have to keep me informed of withdrawals and other types of information that would come to them and not to me.
- I will have to be very responsive to LOC requests to have access to the list.
- we have had some trouble with the Fed system, is it user-friendly and reliable enough?

Now that the survey email address list has been compiled and used for the purposes of the survey, could we not use it once a year to advertise the conference. Not too much traffic, so that become a nuisance in peoples' eyes, but simply send our Call for Papers to these folk. The list contains ~3000 contacts.

Translation

In past years the LOC has been responsible for its own translation and I believe translation costs came out of the conference budget? What happened this year? I need clarification on what to do in the case of conference translation.

List Serve Co-ordinator

The 'Registration Confirmation' e-mail that is sent out to all new registrants is an important tool for introducing members to the list serve and convincing them to add their name to the list. This year, with the new registration system, registrants' attention is also drawn to the list serve by way of the Registration Welcome Page. A confirmation message is sent to the list serve address every time someone signs-up. I often see names of individuals who have just registered on these confirmation e-mails.

Number of Messages Posted

214 messages were sent during the 2008 calendar year.

190 messages were sent during the 2009 calendar year.

260 messages were sent during the 2010 calendar year

Number of Names on the CASCA list

As of April 1st, 2011, there are 694 names on the CASCA list.

The main problems with the list serve are:

1. Individuals trying to use the system as a personal promotional tool. Luckily this has been a minor issue, easily handled. The new Facebook and Twitter accounts, created by Michel B should alleviate some of this problem.
2. Spam, spam, spam, spam....also easily handled. I simply sift through incoming e-mails and delete the rubbish.
3. Sometimes I get e-mails only a couple of days before due dates expressed within the message. As I don't check the list serve every day and I'm sure recipients don't always check their e-mail accounts on a daily basis, some list serve messages are obsolete by the time they are read (or are never sent out to begin with because they are already past due when I open them). This has not been a serious problem, however, I've only had a few e-mails too old to send out over the past few years.

Synchronising the Website job page and List Serve job announcements

Great idea. When I receive job announcements I forward them to Michel who adds them to the job page. Michel sends me weekly lists of new job postings which I send out in a list serve email once a week. This means people are drawn to the website and there is less unnecessary list serve traffic. Anyone interested in job announcements will surely open these list serve emails as long as the 'Job postings/Emplois' subject line is used.

Should we be researching potential job postings ourselves or do we continue to rely on submissions? I could browse for job postings as I surf the university websites making sure our information is current.

Creation of Conference Classifieds Page and its synchronisation with the List serve

Great idea. Again, Michel and I co-ordinate to be sure that website postings get circulated via the list serve, and list serve submissions get added to the classifieds page. These messages, however, are sent out one by one to the list. This is because the subject lines, advertising the exact nature of the CFPs/panel titles, etc, are important in attracting peoples' interest.

List Serve Problem – Summer 2010

There was a temporary breakdown in the list serve system during the summer of 2010. Luckily this is our quietest time of year. Collaboration between York U, Michel and myself lead to a return to normal service. We never found out what caused the problem. Perhaps Michel can explain better. I've had no problems with the system since.

Salisbury Donation Form

The form was created late in 2010. So far not much action but once created it requires no maintenance so this is not a problem. Besides the start-up costs associated with creating it, it costs us nothing. It is good to have as a way for people to pay should they want to contribute to the fund, separate from their membership registration related donations. Is there a way to let people know it exists or should we let people notice by osmosis (seeing it when choosing registration categories from the drop-down list) when registering. Advertising it too much might appear like 'grubbing'.

Survey Project

See the survey report.