

**Minutes of the SAfA Executive Board Meeting, Calgary, 6.30 pm Thursday June  
22nd 2006**

Present: Detlef Gronenborn, Diane Lyons, Susan McIntosh, Peter Mitchell, Isaya Onjala, Ben Smith, Menno Welling, Pamela Willoughby

Apologies: John Arthur, Jeff Fleisher, Elena Garcea

1. Matters arising

*Online institutional subscription and subscription by CNRS-INIST*

Peter Mitchell recounted the various exchanges between the Board and CNRS-INIST regarding the latter's making available for purchase articles downloaded from Nyame Akuma. The response received from Prof. Jean Polet of INIST had been sympathetic to the concerns raised by the Board, but a subsequent communication from M. Duval of INIST drawing an analogy with photocopying charges and suggesting that SAfA should be grateful for the extra publicity thus generated was unacceptable. Discussions with Rice University's legal counsel facilitated by Susan McIntosh indicated that nothing further could easily be done at present. Counsel suggested that in the future, institutional subscriptions could be accompanied by language restricting the uses to which the subscription can be put, effectively enjoining subscribers from engaging in the activity of providing photocopies of Nyame Akuma for a fee. Institutional subscribers can be advised that transgressions will result in cancellation of the subscription. This will be undertaken in the context of a shift to a new system of multi-user, IP-authenticated online subscriptions for institutions (see below).

*Request for endorsement by the Marothodi Institute for Archaeology in Africa*

Peter Mitchell had received a letter from Mark Anderson, head of this organisation, seeking SAfA's endorsement of it. After some discussion it was agreed that this was not something that SAfA has previously done for any organisation, and the Board is unwilling to set a precedent at this point. The retiring President will send a letter to Mr Anderson explaining this, while congratulating him on the efforts being made by him and his colleagues.

*Co-ordination of SAfA meetings with those of the Pan-African Association for Prehistory (PAA)*

Alinah Segobye and Ben Smith of the PAA Council had indicated the latter's wish to develop a co-ordinated schedule of meetings between the PAA and SAfA in order to minimise conflicts in timing and attendance at conferences. It was felt that this might also help support the PAA in maintaining a regular, consistent pattern of meetings on African soil. Subject to it being possible to hold a SAfA Business Meeting and Board Meeting during the next PAA conference and to the latter taking place in 2010, it was agreed to

recommend this proposal to the Business Meeting. The planned schedule of meetings will thus be: SAfA in Europe 2008; SAfA at PAA 2010; SAfA in North America 2012.

### *Amendment of By-Laws to provide for two Africa Members-at-Large*

The proposal to amend the By-Laws to provide for two Members-at-Large from Africa on the Board had been put to the membership of the Society by electronic ballot. While all 44 responses had been in favour, this was too small a number for the amendment to be carried, as it did not meet the quorum requirement stipulated in the By-laws. It was therefore agreed that the proposal be resubmitted to the Business Meeting on June 26th, the notification of the electronic ballot being deemed sufficient notice under the By-Laws. It was agreed to recommend acceptance of the proposal to the Meeting.

In response to a concern raised about the extra travel expense of an additional Member-at-large from Africa to attend the next Business meeting, it was agreed that the next Board should be invited to consider whether it is necessary to revise Article XI, section 5, of the existing By-Laws, which states that the Board can remunerate its members from Society funds for travel expenses incurred in attending to SAfA business. Currently, Board members tend to seek support from their Departments or private funds for travel to the meetings, but this will be difficult for African members-at-large, raising the question of how their travel expenses should be funded.

## **2. Membership statistics**

Jeff Fleisher had sent updated membership statistics which were later communicated to the Business Meeting.

## **3. Treasurer's Report**

Jeff Fleisher had sent a report on SAfA's finances which had been circulated electronically prior to the Meeting. He was thanked by the Board for his work on the Society's behalf. The Board agreed to his proposals to retain individual and institutional subscriptions at their current levels, allowing for a US\$2.00 increase from 2007 in regular members' subscription when also subscribing to *African Archaeological Review*. Student subscriptions to AAR will remain unchanged.

A proposal to implement a cut-off date of, say, February 1st for members wishing the Treasurer to process their journal subscriptions was considered and will need confirmation by the next Board.

The Board then considered the case for the development of IP-authenticated online institutional subscriptions. There was unanimous support for proceeding with this as it should provide institutions and their members with access to all back numbers of *Nyame Akuma*, enhance free access by African institutions and bring SAfA in line with developments among other scientific publications. The Board found Susan McIntosh's estimates of an approximate US\$ 1200 start-up cost and annual US\$ 100 maintenance

charge acceptable and thanked her and Jeff Fleisher for their work on this issue. It was agreed that online institutional subscriptions should be set, in the first instance, at US\$ 90 per year and be made available subject to accepting a form of words such as the following, once cleared with legal counsel:

*Purchase of this institutional subscription is conditional upon the subscriber not charging or offering for sale to any individual, or to any other institution, the access thereby made available to current and past issues of Nyame Akuma. The subscriber undertakes neither to impose, nor to solicit, such a charge for the reading or downloading of any part of any issue of Nyame Akuma and further undertakes not to share his institutional subscription with any other institution. Failure to comply with these conditions will result in the immediate cancellation of the subscription concerned.*

Jeff further reported that he had secured non-profit status under US law for the Society and the Board reconfirmed its wish that any funds be used first to facilitate access to SAfA meetings by archaeologists based in Africa and secondly to provide research grants for African students.

#### **4. Nyame Akuma Editor's Report**

Pam Willoughby presented a report on *Nyame Akuma*, which was later communicated to the Business Meeting. She included updated information on the plagiarism case that she had reported at the Bergen conference in 2004 and provided dates for the publication of the next two issues of *Nyame Akuma*. Abstracts of papers given at the Calgary conference will be published in the December 2006 issue.

#### **5. Webmaster's Report**

Susan McIntosh presented a report on the development of the SAfA listserv and website, the contents of which were later communicated to the Business Meeting. Future membership of the Website Committee was considered and it was agreed to ask members to do more by way of using the site to make announcements of conferences, posts and publications.

#### **6. Ethics Committee**

The Board considered the draft code of ethics developed by the Committee and considered how best to present it to the Business Meeting. There was unanimous agreement that it should be recommended for adoption by the Society. The comment from Ibrahim Thiaw, member of the Committee, that every African colleague with whom he had spoken on the subject wished to see the code adopted, was particularly welcomed. It was agreed that the existing By-Laws provide sufficient sanction for the enforcement of the Code.

#### **7. SAA/ASA Symposium Committee**

Committee members had sent comments by email to Peter Mitchell, who relayed them to the Board and subsequently reported them to the Business Meeting. It was agreed that all those who had organised African-themed sessions at the 2006 SAA meeting deserved thanks and that SAfA should sponsor more such events, concentrating on coherent themes that would attract non-Africanists, include at least one non-Africanist discussant and perhaps be linked to a SAfA (or university department)- sponsored reception.

Peter Mitchell reported that Claire Smith, President of the World Archaeological Congress (WAC), was favourably disposed to SAfA sponsoring themes or sessions at the WAC Congress in Jamaica in May 2007 and it was agreed that the next Board be asked to take this matter forward, along with the inclusion of more African institutions in WAC's Global Libraries Project.

## **8. Regional Conferences Committee**

A report from Merrick Posnansky, Chairman of this Committee, was welcomed and discussed. Merrick was thanked for his work on behalf of SAfA and it was agreed to ask him to represent the Society at the next meeting of the West African Association of Archaeologists (WAAA). It was also agreed to accept his suggestion of developing closer links between SAfA and such regional archaeological bodies by asking WAAA and the Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists (ASAPA) to nominate a delegate to sit-in on the meeting of the Board at the next conference venue. Such delegates might be among those for whom the next Organising Committee will seek travel funds.

## **9. SAfA Book Prize**

Peter Mitchell reported in Elena Garcea's absence on the results of the newly constituted Book Prize and on the process involved in the decision reached. The Board welcomed the news that the Prize would be awarded to Ann Stahl for her edited volume *African Archaeology: A Critical Introduction*.

## **10. Student Meeting**

Menno Welling and Isaya Onjala reported on the matters discussed by the Student Meeting earlier in the day, which were later communicated to the Business Meeting.

## **11. Venue of the next SAfA Conference**

Only one invitation had been received, for SAfA to meet in Frankfurt, Germany, in 2008. While welcoming this invitation from Peter Breunig and colleagues, the Board was mindful of the likely high cost of accommodation there, though accepting that flights to and from the city might be relatively cheap. In accepting the invitation and recommending it to the Business Meeting, the Board asked the President to communicate its concerns to Prof. Breunig, which he did, receiving assurances that costs would be kept down.

## **12. Election of new officers**

On 6/12/06, President Peter Mitchell sent out an email call for nominations for all the elected, voting positions on the Board, which could be transmitted either by email or by written notice at Calgary. Having gratefully received nominations for Members at Large from North America (Matthew Curtis) and Europe (Anne Haour; Eric Huysecom), as well as the consent of Jeff Fleisher to serve a further term as Treasurer, the Board considered what it might do to find candidates for the posts of President, Recording Secretary and Members-at-Large from Africa. The Board considered it acceptable to take nominations from the floor for any of the member-at-large positions, since these do not entail major time inputs, such that a potential nominee could agree from the floor, without time for reflection, to stand for election. President and Recording Secretary have work burdens that merit thoughtful consideration of a request to stand for election. It was therefore decided that the Board would act as a Nominating Committee for these two offices. Suggestions were made for these positions. Diane Lyons agreed to stand for Recording Secretary. Peter Mitchell agreed to sound out a series of candidates for the post of President ahead of the Business Meeting.

There being no further business, the Board Meeting ended at 9.00 pm.