

**DEMHIST General Assembly 2016**  
**4.00-6.00 pm, Tuesday, 5th July 2016, MICO Centre**  
**Amber 1 (South Wing – Level +2)**  
**Milan, Italy**

MINUTES

Present:

Board members: John Barnes - *Chair*; Ana Cristina Carvalho - *Vice Chair*; Gianluca Kannés - *Vice Chair*; Elsa Rodrigues - *Secretary-Treasurer*; Carmen Jiménez Sanz - *board member*; Minerva Keltanen - *board member*; Aysen Savas - *Board member*  
Ulla Strømberg - *board member*

DEMHIST individual members: Gustavo Brognara; Karin Magnavita; Roberto Andréu Quevedo; Marta Antuñano; Jordi Falgàs Casanovas; Yuko Fujii; Maki Tokugawa; Carlos D. M. Faggin; Rauni Laukkanen; Rosanna Pavoni; José Alberto Ribeiro; Remko Jansonius; Hillary Walker-Gugan; Maria de Jesus Monge; Carlid R. Nold; Vicky Keuckberg; Daniela Ball; Hartmut Dorgerloh; Ruggero Ranieri; Timna Seligman; Francesca Baldri

Non-voting members: Monica Bietti; Anders Juhl; Hortensia von Roten; Iris Broers

**1. Welcome**

John Barnes welcomed members and said «I hope you don't mind conducting this General Assembly in English». Then he mentioned the agenda topics.

**2. Minutes of the General Assembly in Mexico City**  
**- Approval of the minutes**

John Barnes affirmed that the Mexico City conference was an excellent one and was very well organized. The minutes were quickly approved because there was nothing to change or add in the text and no comments were made.

**3. Report of the Chair**  
**- Approval of the report 2015-2016**

John Barnes went through his report, page by page, giving special emphasis to the Strategic plan 2014-2017. After that the report was approved.

#### **4. Report of the Secretary-Treasurer - Approval of the report 2015-2016**

John Barnes mentioned that Elsa's report just reports a half year of activities because it is from November 2015 to June 2016. He also mentioned the fact that Elsa answers a large number of queries and questions, so we have to find a solution in the future. Then he skim-read the report which was immediately approved. He also thanked Elsa Rodrigues for her hard work because he was conscious that it takes a lot of time communicating with members and he recognised her commitment to the DEMHIST committee.

John Barnes reinforced the idea that «Elsa has been informing us during the year. She introduces the DEMHIST new individual and institutional members». At this point Gianluca Kannés asked «Would it be possible to put that information into a newsletter?»

Then Daniela Ball asked «Have you prepared a list of participants?» John Barnes explained that we did not prepare one because it is against ICOM's privacy policy. Consequently, Remko Jansonius and other members suggested that people could decide if they wanted to divulge their names and contacts. «People could write an authorization document allowing DEMHIST to divulge their personal data» as we did at Compiègne conference two years ago. That might be a solution to this problem because it makes no sense to be a member of an international committee when members are not able to directly contact each other.

#### **- Approval of the budget for 2017**

John Barnes quickly explained the budget for 2017, underlining that Elsa Rodrigues has made a prediction about the financial report since the year didn't finish yet. Moreover, «There is a restricted fund that we cannot use in conferences which is the donation that Bill Watson made for a bursary on Jeanny Watson's memory». Then the budget was approved.

#### **5. 2<sup>nd</sup> Training Course for professionals in Mexico**

Last year, Lourdes Monges, on the behalf of *Red de Casas Museo México*, offered to host the next DEMHIST training course. It was agreed to organise a low budget training course in Mexico City. John Barnes stressed the idea that «We have to work through partnership. It is the only way to save some money since ICOM annual subvention is decreasing year after year. For the moment we just have to deal with the situation».

#### **6. Conferences - Feedback on the Milan conference**

Regarding the Milan conference a question was raised: «Do you have an evaluation form? We used to have an evaluation form a couple of years ago. It was important to

know attendees' feedback to improve. Do you happen to have an evaluation form for this conference?»

«No, we don't have it. But we will send it by email».

#### - **Proposal for the 2017 conference**

John Barnes informed that «In our last conference we announced that we would organise a joint conference with CECA in Helsinki but unfortunately for financial reasons it is not possible to do it. Portugal is not out of the table. However, DEMHIST Board prefers a London location. The theme is going to be about learning. In fact, in London we can find partners and best practice examples. Moreover, according to our conversation with CECA Chairperson next conference is more likely to happen in London».

#### - **Proposal for the 2018 conference**

John Barnes proceeded saying that «We also have two proposals for 2018. Ayşen Savaş has a proposal for holding a conference in Ankara and we recently had an offer from Chicago. So, now we are thinking about Chicago but we still have some questions».

Carl Nold said «I read Chicago's proposal last night. In fact, Chicago's proposal is a very strong and good one. It gives us some assurance. Chicago is still accessible because it is less expensive than other U.S. cities. In any case, it is important to find a free venue to reduce the conference cost, to allow a reasonable conference fee. Therefore, it should have some support from the university».

John Barnes reminded members that «We will have board elections next year. So, we need to hand over this question to the next Board».

#### - **2019 conference, Kyoto, Japan**

Yuko Fujii started presenting the 2019 conference using a PowerPoint presentation, giving examples of Japanese Historic Houses.

Hartmut Dorgerloh asked «What is the theme for the Kyoto conference?». Yuko Fujii said «Museums as cultural hubs: the future of tradition».

Hartmut Dorgerloh commented «I wonder if we could collaborate more with other committees». John replied that «We have been making joint conferences. I am sure it should not be with a big committee. Next conference is going to be a joint conference with CECA. London fits better because the venue is bigger, therefore can host more attendees».

### **7. Reports from the National Groups**

John Barnes explained that DEMHIST Board encourages networking groups and members working with their groups in their countries or regions.

## **Turkey**

Ayşen Savaş reported that «Every day we have new members. We are meeting every six months. We have met once in Ankara and three times in Istanbul so far». She announced that «the 4<sup>th</sup> National Symposium on House Museums is going to take place in Busra and we are spreading the word».

## **Portugal**

José Alberto Ribeiro stated that the Portuguese National Meeting took place in Évora, in February and due to the growth of tourism we have decided to focus presentations on tourism. It was a cross-border meeting, and for that reason, Carmen Jiménez Sanz, DEMHIST councillor, talked about tourism in the Community of Madrid.

He also reinforced the idea that «It will be difficult to support the DEMHIST/CECA conference next year in Lisbon since ICOM Portugal is financially struggling to hold their activities».

## **Brazil**

Ana Cristina Carvalho said that the Brazilian National Group is a very active one. They have been holding meetings for ten years. Karin Magnavita de Carvalho and Gustavo Brognara are involved on its organisation. Accessibility is going to be the theme of the next meeting.

## **Mexico**

Since Lourdes Monges was not attending the General Assembly, John Barnes gave some inputs on the Mexican National Group. «Mexican colleagues organises several meetings a year. We encourage National Groups because it is easier to gather together. If you want to create a new National Group we are glad to support it».

## **Italy**

Gianluca Kannés said that the Italian meeting took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> October at *Fondazione Adolfo Pini*, in Milan. The meeting focused on House Museum Kitchens and it was a huge success.

## **8. Update on the Lexicon Project proposal**

Carlos Faggini started saying that «For those who have not been to Mexico City this project might sound strange. Lexicon Project was approved by DEMHIST members on the last General Assembly. We are awaiting for the support of the Board now».

Rosanna Pavoni added that «The idea is to create a Lexicon on House Museum's museological ideas because using just one language is an impoverishment. We have three official ICOM languages. Portuguese comes out with a huge terminology. Italian as well. Why don't we use a Lexicon? Home – *Casa*. There is an affection meaning and an objective meaning in that word».

Then she gave the example of the Italian expression *Architettura d'interni* that in English is often translated into *Internal Design*. However, the concept it is not entirely correct because *Architettura d'interni* is something wider. In fact, we cannot translate it into English because there is no such idea in English vocabulary. So, we need to compare different words that mean and reveal different approaches on Museology. But how to do it without money? I already contacted the Department of Linguistics from University of Bergamo about this project. I believe that anyone writing an essay or an article can add words to the glossary.

We could apply for an ICOM Special Projects Grant in order to go further with the project. It would be a three-year project. In the first year we would collect words. In the second year we would keep collecting and researching. In the third year we could hold a symposium and then open an online resource.

We could start circulating this project on Facebook right now. Members could post on Facebook in an active way, driving forces to bring people together.

After listening to this project's description Ruggero Ranieri asked «How many languages would we use in this project?». Rosanna Pavoni answered that would depend on the contribution we would receive. For a start the project could cover the three ICOM official languages, plus Italian and Portuguese. Ruggero Ranieri claimed «There are so many languages in the world!» Why pick those five? What are the criteria? Rosana Pavoni said «If we don't have Chinese colleagues we cannot go on with the Chinese lexicon, for instance».

Maria de Jesus Monge took as example the ICOM Code of Ethics that is written in the three ICOM official languages. However National Committees had to translate it into their languages. We could do the same way with this project.

Ulla Strømberg said that «The Lexicon Project is not a DEMHIST high priority issue. It is not on our top-priority issue now».

According to Rosana Pavoni «Museologists should not just work for academic ideas but also achieve a tool. This project is really important and we should share it among colleagues. We should be conscious of our aim. How to better work in House Museums?»

Ayşen Savaş asked to members «Should we discuss this? If it fails it fails. Let's see if they work in three years' time. As a principle I would say: give them a certain time, let them do it. Don't criticise it».

John Barnes said «Lexicon Project does not require funds to implement it. We should put some boundaries on it. We should define which terms and languages this project would cover. Rosanna, you should write a proposal for the ICOM Special Projects Grant».

Rosanna Pavoni insisted: «But we need DEMHIST's support». John Barnes clarified: «If you want members working on a voluntary networking basis it is fine. We will do it. We will provide networking. Those who wish will join the project. On the other hand, you cannot ask DEMHIST members to participate since they might have other commitments or might not be interested in it. We cannot impose them to work on this

project. Moreover, it is difficult for this Board to guarantee that all Board Members will work on this project because we are struggling to run our activities».

In Carmen Jiménez Sanz's opinion «This project is a good idea. Did you understand?» Daniel Ball said that we could distribute tasks. But even though there are no people on the board to cover each language».

### **Update on communications**

- **Website**
- **Social media survey of members**

John Barnes informed that unfortunately the new website is still not live.

After that he explained that DEMHIST wanted to start a social media but didn't want to pick one randomly. So, the purpose of this survey was to discover which social media platform would best serve our members. Therefore, Hillary Gugan-Walker prepared us a survey that was distributed to members in the three ICOM official languages.

Then Hillary Gugan-Walker took the floor and showed us the results of the survey. DEMHIST just got 65 responses. That means that just 14% of members returned the survey and 86% didn't answer.

By answering the question «*What kind of content would you like to see DEMHIST post to their website? Discussion board; Calendar of upcoming events; Social media feed from DEMHIST account; House Museums resource repository and previous conference proceedings; Resources and relevant articles; General ICOM News*» we learnt that members want everything.

«*Are you interested in receiving a regular newsletter from DEMHIST?*» The answer to that question was clear: Yes, members are highly interested in receiving a newsletter.

«*Does your institution maintain any social media accounts? Yes. No. If yes, please answer questions 4 and 5. If no, please skip to question 6*»

«*Which social media platforms does your institution use? Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, Other (please specify)?*» Most members answered that their institutions are on Facebook.

«*Would your institution be interested in sharing posts with a DEMHIST social media account? Yes. No.*» Most members answered that their institutions are interested in sharing posts.

«*Which social media platform would you prefer DEMHIST to use? Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn or Google+?*» Most members replied they would prefer Facebook.

On the survey members could also share any additional comments they may have.

Some of them wrote that they would prefer Elsa Rodrigues to keep informing them about DEMHIST activities and that they are thankful to her for the work done.

Hillary gave the additional information that she already created a Facebook account and that she had been posting during the conference. «We already have ninety-six posts reached, nineteen post engagements and one website click so far» she said.

Members can use the hashtag #ICOMDEM HIST2016 for this conference and #ICOMDEM HIST for general information.

Furthermore, John Barnes explained that «We cannot keep going on with our email. This is definitely a more dynamic way of communication. In the following months someone will have to pick up the task».

After that Hillary Walker-Gugan explained how members can post. John Barnes added that «Hillary offered to do it and we had other people volunteering as well». Hillary Walker-Gugan said that «Members can post directly. We can connect with other networks. There are a lot of opportunities we can follow up on». To conclude, John Barnes reinforced the idea that «Facebook is generally supported by members!».

## **9. Any other business**

John Barnes asked «Can we move on? Do you have any thoughts?».

Hartmut Dorgerloh told the assembly about the European Council Heritage Year, adding that «European Associations can participate. We have to share our heritage, creating networks. There will be a programme and I will post it on Facebook».

## **10. Next General Assembly**

John Barnes announced that the next DEMHIST General Assembly is going to take place in London, in October next year. After that, he closed the Assembly by saying «I have to declare our Assembly closed».

Elsa Rodrigues  
DEM HIST Secretary-Treasurer  
Lisbon, August 2016