



CAM Bulletin No. 46 May/June 2018

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dr Richard Benjamin

Museums in a Post-Colonial Commonwealth

In partnership with the International Slavery Museum, CAM organised *Museums in a Post-Colonial Commonwealth: identities, issues and opportunities*, to mark the Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) meeting in London from 16-20 April. The symposium examined how cultures, their histories, stories and material objects have been and are represented in a museum context in the Commonwealth. Can a reappraisal of “colonial museums” enable dialogue and democracy? How do museums, their publics and objects interact? Catherine C. Cole, Secretary General of CAM, discussed ‘Museums and CHOGM themes: fairness, prosperity, sustainability and security’, and highlighted the important work that CAM carries out, particularly in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific.

Professor Graham Black and Dr Chris Reynolds (Nottingham Trent University) explored ‘Museums and Difficult History: Northern Ireland’s ‘68 at 50’ at Ulster Museum which focuses on civil rights movements during what became known as ‘The Troubles’. They concluded that ‘there is no single truth – instead, multiple perspectives based on lived experiences’.

Holly Tebbutt and Ali Eisa from Autograph ABP in London – which advocates the inclusion of historically



“They are here because you were there. There is no understanding Englishness without understanding its imperial and colonial dimensions.”

Professor Stuart Hall, 2008

© Holly Tebbutt
marginalised photographic practices, discussed ‘Decolonising the Archive’ by looking at their exhibitions such as *Black Chronicles II* in 2014 which: explored Black presences in 19th and early 20th-century Britain, through the prism of studio portraiture. Priya Khanchandani, writer and curator, was recently appointed Deputy Editor of *Icon* and co-runs Museum Detox - a network for BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) museum professionals. She focused on the need to ‘decolonise museums’ and did not shy away from what she called some of the ‘atrocities of Empire’.

Before the lively Q & A Nicholas Watts from the Institute of Commonwealth Studies said a few words about a project which is looking to develop a permanent exhibition to address Empire and Commonwealth History. A fascinating event showing the appetite for this type of dialogue.

Best regards,

Richard

RECENT CAM EVENTS

Human Remains Management and Policy

Workshop hosted by

The University of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia

March 22-23, 2018

organised by the Commonwealth Association of Museums and the Museums Association of Namibia in collaboration with

the Iziko Museums of South Africa, the National Museum of Botswana, ICOM Namibia, ICOM Botswana and ICOM South Africa, ICOM ICME (the International Committee for Museums of Ethnography)



Some of the workshop participants in front of the *Who Were They* mobile exhibition

This workshop built on one that took place in 2017 at Iziko Museums of South Africa in Cape Town which focused on human remains issues in southern Africa and internationally, and the Iziko collection of 'unethical' remains, unethical in terms of how or why they had been obtained. The majority of the remains were identified as having been obtained from Namibia and Botswana, hence the project has, initially, concentrated on these three countries

Thirty-two colleagues from seven countries (Botswana, Canada, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Zambia) participated in the Namibia workshop, the first to deal with the sensitive issue of human remains in Namibia. Interest in the project is growing within southern Africa as there is a need to develop guidelines for working with origin communities on the provenance and management of human remains in museum collections and the 'return' of remains from foreign museums.



Check out the project website at:

<https://www.humanremainsinsouthernafrica.org/>

Jangira Kangira, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Namibia welcomed participants and spoke about the need for universities to tackle sensitive issues and move the conversation forward. Rudo Sithole of the African Council of Museums (AFRICOM) emphasised the need for inclusivity and understanding regarding the sensitive topic of human remains in museum collections. She contextualised the current initiative in the wider African context.

Veno Kauaria, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, spoke about the importance of this workshop for Namibia, arguing, "We need to develop new models for African museums that are rooted in our traditions and that reflect an African perspective on the past." She explained that the Ministry "believes strongly in forging partnerships at the national and international level to help us achieve our goals. I see this workshop as an important step in the right direction where, by working together, we can develop our own solutions and guidelines." She posed some of the key questions for the workshop, about the place of human remains in museum collections and about consultations with origin communities

MAN launched the travelling exhibition *Who were they?: An exhibition on human remains collection in southern Africa* and the project website

<https://www.humanremainsinsouthernafrica.org/> both designed by CAM intern, Paige Linner. MAN Director and CAM board member Jeremy Silvester spoke about the project's goals and invited participants to suggest ways in which the website and travelling exhibition might be used and expanded to assist with the development of guidelines and/or policy on human remains management.

Wendy Black, Curator of Archaeology, Iziko Museums of South Africa, provided an overview of the project, its current partners, aims and objectives. She explained



Sarah Zungu, Member Namibia San Council (centre) discussing the exhibition with Seychelles' delegates Nathalie Belle (left) and Bella Rose (right).



Paul Ludik, Head of the National Forensic Science

Members of the Community Consultation Roundtable Institute in Namibia, spoke about how human remains can and have been used to further scientific and historic knowledge. He explained the process followed when human remains are found which determines whether the discovery leads to a court case or whether the museum is informed. He outlined existing laws and regulations in Namibia and the key points that, he believes, will need to be considered when writing a policy. He also informed participants that there are many archaeological sites in Namibia with reinterred human remains that have not yet been examined by the National Heritage Council due to limited resources.

Acting Deputy Director, National Museum of Namibia Nzila Marina Mubsisi chaired a roundtable discussion with Senior Lecturer at the University of Namibia and Head of the Oshiwambo Section Petrus Mbenzi, member of the Namibian San Council Sarah Zungu, Nama Traditional Leaders Association member Fritz Isak Dirkse, University of Namibia representative Esther Muinjangu, and Director of Tourism Sem Shikongo. Together they shed light on cultural practices surrounding death and burial and community perspectives on how repatriated remains should be approached.

On Day 2, CAM Secretary-General Catherine C. Cole introduced policy development, explained the processes that should be followed, and described a framework that might be used to develop a policy for human remains management in museums in southern Africa.

Wendy Black spoke about unethically collected human remains, the development of Iziko's collection and Human Remains Policy, sparking discussion about how Iziko policies and methods might be adapted by other museums throughout southern Africa.

that the project was, initially, intended to run for three years with workshops in South Africa in 2017, Namibia in 2018 and Botswana in 2019

Alma Nankela, Archaeologist and Rock Art Specialist at the National Heritage Council spoke about the form that human remains take and the uses that are made of them in archaeology. She provided an overview of what can be classified as human remains, how they are typically discovered in Namibia and how they need to be treated and stored. Goodman Gwasira, Senior Lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Namibia spoke about the importance of terminology, the sensitive nature of this topic, and the complexity of policy to address it.

Rooksana Omar, Chief Executive Officer, Iziko Museums of South Africa and a member of International Council of Museums Standing Committee on Museum Ethics (ETHCOM) spoke about the standards that should be adhered to when managing human remains. She made particular reference to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the ICOM Code of Ethics as setting benchmarks that should inform any human remains policy.

Morongwa Mosothwane, Senior Lecturer in Archaeology (Forensic Archaeology) at the University of Botswana, outlined Botswana's regulatory framework and the unique challenges the country faces. Emma Haitengi argued the need for a wide-ranging policy on human remains in Namibia. George Mudenda, Director of the Livingstone Museum, spoke about human remains policy in museums in Zambia and how the Livingstone Museum is dealing with these issues.



Participants invited shared a Commonwealth Big Lunch, an initiative celebrating the Commonwealth, encouraging people to come together and make new connections. Thematic cupcakes made the event a little more special. The Commonwealth Big Lunch complemented what the workshop was trying to promote: togetherness and making connections.

In the afternoon, participants split into small groups to discuss questions that had been raised both before and during the workshop, present their opinions to the rest of the participants and lead a discussion. These discussions were recorded so that they can be used to help frame a policy in the future. The five questions considered by the groups were:

- How do we determine to whom ancestral remains belong?
- Should scientific research on human remains be allowed and what benefits could it provide?
- How do we involve communities in policy development and what role do local communities play in identifying collections?
- What are the commonalities between the issues affecting southern African countries?
- What are the pros/cons of displaying remains in museums and how should we approach this issue? If they are not to be displayed, what should be done with them once they are returned?

Outcomes

The press release produced at the end of the workshop generated considerable media coverage particularly on human remains from Namibia held in the Iziko collection. Immediate outcomes from the workshop include:

1. Recommendations which will help shape the guidelines and policy for southern Africa and provide direction for the next year of the project.

2. Government and community representatives and international guests met to further this issue in Namibia and southern Africa.



Participants enjoying the Commonwealth Big Lunch

3. Participants began to share resources and opinions, and create open lines of communication to provide the basis for a network of stakeholders in the region.
4. CAM and AFRICOM met to discuss future collaboration.
5. CAM held our AGM in Namibia and welcomed new members from the region.
6. Participants drafted a declaration that reflects the consensus of the workshop and can be used to facilitate further work on this important subject.



Ink and blood: Stories of abolition **Exhibition Tour**

The International Slavery Museum (ISM) provided an exhibition tour in conjunction with the pre-CHOGM symposium discussed in Richard's 'From the President' column above. The tour of the temporary exhibition *Ink and blood: Stories of abolition* at the International Slavery Museum was led by Curator Jean-Francois Manicom of Guadeloupe who introduced the theme by talking about how slavery underlines all experience in the Caribbean. The exhibition focuses on photographs and stories of specific individuals and artists' interventions including first person narratives written by the curator where the slaves' own voices are silent are effective in personalising slavery.



Top: Participants on the tour examining a ledger of slaves owned by the Roslin Castle Estate in Jamaica; Bottom: One of the artists' interventions a young girl's dress made of cotton produced by slaves



It was an unusually beautiful day in London for the reception at Buckingham Palace.

Results of CHOGM at the working level include the formation of a 'Culture Cluster' within the Accredited Commonwealth Organisations. Culture – while commonly considered the fourth pillar of sustainable development – continues to be overlooked by meeting organisers. Ten years ago the Commonwealth Foundation produced a publication titled: *Putting Culture First: Commonwealth Perspectives on Culture and Development*. Yet today, the word 'culture' does not appear in the Commonwealth Secretariat's new Strategic Plan. CAM members are actively working on many of the SDGs, issues which were discussed in various sessions.

The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative held a side event on Reengaging with the *Commonwealth: Gambia and Zimbabwe* at Senate House in London. CAM welcomed The Gambia back to the Commonwealth in the March/April issue of the *CAM Bulletin*. At CHOGM, the UK expressed its support for Zimbabwe re-entering the Commonwealth following democratic elections later this year. In 2013, when it looked like Zimbabwe would re-enter the Commonwealth, CAM and the Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (ACLALS) visited Zimbabwe and met with more than 100 people in the cultural sector there, and drafted a report titled *Re-Engaging with Zimbabwe through Arts and Culture – A Needs Audit for Commonwealth Countries*. We're interested in updating this information and supporting Zimbabwe's re-entry.

The next CHOGM will be held in Rwanda in 2020 and we're already strategising to ensure that CAM will play an active role.

RECENT COMMONWEALTH EVENTS

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), London, UK, April 14-24, 2018

CAM participated in the People's Forum at the recent CHOGM and was an observer at the Foreign Ministers' meetings. As an Accredited Commonwealth Organisation, we were also honoured to be invited to the opening ceremony at Buckingham Palace and the Commonwealth Secretary-General's reception at St. James Palace.

Following three days of discussions, the People's Forum presented a Declaration and Calls to Action to the Heads of Government. Among the Calls were several that CAM is already working on: Indigenous Rights (the Human Remains Management project); Migration (the Migration:Cities project); and Climate Justice (our recent workshop in Fiji).

CAM PROJECTS



Refugees and museums' panel participants included (L-R): Jennifer Carter, Université du Québec à Montréal; Chandra Erlendson, Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Winnipeg; Martin Segger; Dafina Savic, Montreal Holocaust Museum.

Migration:Cities I (im)migration and arrival cities

The third and final *Migration:Cities* workshop is being held at the Frankfurt Historical Museum in Germany on June 2. A report will follow in the next *CAM Bulletin*. For more information about the *Migration:Cities* project, content areas and guidelines for video contributions go to: <http://network.icom.museum/camoc/about/about-camoc/>. in collaboration with ICOM CAMOC (Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities, ICOM ICR (International Committee for Regional Museums), ICOM Germany, and the Frankfurt Historical Museum

Former CAM President Martin Segger spoke about the *Migration:Cities* project on a panel about *Refugees and museums: Critical practices for innovative actions in the age of migration* at the recent Canadian Museums Association Conference in Vancouver, Canada. The panel was coordinated by Deniz Unsal of the University of Victoria, BC.

CAM PROGRAMMES

CAM PUBLICATIONS

Download your copy of CAM's newest publication *Access in Museums in South Asia* from our website <http://www.maltwood.uvic.ca/cam/publications/access-museums-south-asia.html>.

Post-Colonial Museology

Many museums in the Commonwealth share a colonial past and in the post-colonial world are rethinking their

mandates. The focus is no longer on preserving and interpreting 'dying' cultures or mythologising settler societies. Museums are becoming more complex, changing their relationships to Indigenous peoples and including histories of more recent immigrants. Some are becoming more active in addressing contemporary issues such as those expressed by the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

CAM, in collaboration with the Canadian Museum of History (CMH) and Athabasca University, is publishing a book about post-colonial museology, co-edited by Catherine C. Cole, CAM and Jonathan Lainey, CMH. Abstracts of 250 words with 150 word biographies are welcome by June 30, 2018. The final submissions are due October 31. For further information or to receive the Call for Papers, contact: CatherineC.Cole@telus.net.

CAM INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

CAM is grateful for funding received from the Young Canada Works at Building Careers in Heritage Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage administered by the Canadian Museums Association. CAM has applied for two internships in 2018-2019, one to continue work on the Human Remains Management Project, spending three months at Iziko Museums of South Africa in Cape Town and three months at the University of Botswana in Gaborone. A Culture and Heritage Intern at the iTaukei Trust Fund Board in Suva, Fiji would follow up on our workshop there by creating an edu-kit, initiating a collections management database, preparing a proposal for a gender equality project, etc. With the support of this programme, CAM has placed 30 interns throughout the Commonwealth.

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CAM DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMME

Congratulations to Jabaun Correia, Kizzie Kitt, Karen Budhram, Mulissa Nelson, Mintie Pitamber, and Shana Adonis of Guyana who recently completed the CAM Distance Learning Programme. The CAM DLP is convenient way to access training while working in your local museum. If you or your staff need training in basic museum studies, please review the information on our website and contact the Secretariat:

<http://www.maltwood.uvic.ca/cam/programs/distance-learning.html>.

COMMONWEALTH MUSEUMS NEWS

Recent Events at the Vanuatu Culture Centre

By Richard Wood



Top: Prince Charles mingling in the crowd; Bottom: Richard Shing preparing for the Prince's visit.

Prince Charles made his first visit to Port Vila, Vanuatu, on April 7th, 2018 as part of his tour to open the XXI Commonwealth Games. This is the first time that a member of the Royal Family has visited Vanuatu since the Duke of Edinburgh visited in 1974. The main events and ceremonies took place outside the Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta (Vanuatu Cultural Centre or VKS) at the Chief's Nakamal, where Prince Charles was granted the honorary title of High Chief and the High Chief name, Mal Menaringmanu. VKS Director Richard Shing wore traditional garb from his home island of Aneityum and escorted Prince Charles on a private tour of the Chief's Nakamal. Thousands of Ni-Vanuatu gathered in celebration, including hundreds of people in traditional dress and dozens of singers and dancers. The Royal Visit was scheduled to last a brief four hours, but Vanuatu certainly provided an unforgettable experience for the Prince.

Richard Shing has hosted me, a CAM assistant and anthropologist, for an informal 30 day internship in

Vanuatu. I focussed my studies on traditional food culture, and its intricate relationship with land, health and disaster resource management.

The VKS also held a workshop in Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and building resilience in association with UNESCO and CRIHAP (Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region). VKS staff received training primarily from facilitators, Sipirano Nemani and Rechenel Ansano, among others. Through this workshop, the VKS staff were able to better understand UNESCO, ICH and safeguarding practices through seminars, discussion and an excursion to document ICH on the nearby island of Nguna. The experience has inspired me to pursue further anthropological studies on traditional food culture and the use of traditional knowledge in response to the changing environment.

Museums and the Climate Challenge



The Coalition of Museums for Climate Justice (CMCJ), the Alberta Museums Association (AMA) and Shadow Light Productions announce the launch of a new video *Museums and the Climate Challenge*, first in a three-part series that will raise awareness of this vital issue and support the global museum community in taking an active role in the fight against climate change. It shares real-life examples of ideas, programs, and services used by museums to address climate change and the stewardship of the environment. These practical ideas highlight the role of museums as agents of change and places of engagement within their communities. With the ideas and tools provided in this video, museums will be able to make changes and engage in a broader dialogue with their communities around these important issues. For more information contact: Robert R. Janes, Founder and Co-Chair, Coalition of Museums for Climate Justice r.pjanes@telus.net and check out their website at <https://coalitionofmuseumsforclimatejustice.wordpress.com>

Canadian MP tables Bill C-391, Aboriginal Cultural Property Repatriation Act



Liberal MP Bill Casey has tabled a private member's bill that calls on the federal government, in co-operation with Indigenous Peoples and the provinces, to create a national strategy that includes a mechanism for Indigenous communities and organisations to repatriate encourage the return of cultural items. Casey was inspired by seeing a copy of a beautifully embroidered mid-19th century Mi'kmaq robe at the Millbrook First Nation cultural centre in Truro, Nova Scotia. The original, purchased from a Mi'kmaq artisan in 1843 by British army officer and writer Samuel Huyghue was bequeathed to the museum in Melbourne, Australia on his death.

Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/liberal-mp-s-bill-aims-to-create-national-strategy-for-repatriating-indigenous-cultural-items-1.4517725>

ICOM NEWS

International Museum Day, May 18 2018

ICOM's 2018 International Museum Day theme is *Museums in a Digital World*. Are you planning a special event for International Museum Day? If so, please send CAM a brief report and one or two photographs for inclusion in the *CAM Bulletin*.

RENEW OR JOIN CAM NOW!

It's time to renew for 2018! Members receive the *CAM Bulletin*, may participate in the distance learning programme, host an intern, receive a registration discount, and are eligible for travel bursaries. Have a voice – and votes – at ICOM and contribute to Commonwealth deliberations. Payment is accepted by PayPal, electronic bank transfer or bank draft. Please complete the membership form at http://www.maltwood.uvic.ca/cam/about/membership_info.html. CAM is now offering reciprocal

memberships to regional associations and ICOM Affiliated Organisations, International Committees and National Committees in the Commonwealth. Contact the Secretariat for further information.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Zahra Hussain, Founder and Director, Laajvard, Islamabad, Pakistan; Dr. Ambika Bipin Patel, Associate Professor, Department of Museology, Faculty of Fine Arts, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat, India; Vereniki Nalio, Manager, Education, Fiji Museum, Seema Hollenberg Director of Research, Collections and Exhibitions The Manitoba Museum; Nzila Marina Mubisi, Acting Deputy Director, National Museum of Namibia; George Mudenda, Director of the Livingstone Museum, Zambia

CAM Executive Council 2017-2020

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Dr Jeremy Silvester, Director, Museums Association of Namibia, Windhoek

Wesley A. Wenhardt, Executive Director, Foss Waterway Seaport Maritime Museum, Tacoma, Washington/Vancouver, BC

Contribute to the next *CAM Bulletin*!

Send news or a 300 word profile of your institution by June 15 to CatherineC.Cole@telus.net.