

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN WOMEN COMPOSERS
l'Association des femmes compositeurs canadiennes

Annual General Meeting, 25 June 2005

Canadian Music Centre, Board Room, Toronto

Report from Chair/President

Introduction

I am honoured to have been elected the Chair/President of the ACWC/AFCC and it has been a good experience working with the members of the Board and seeing positive results emerging after a year of hard work.

My report is in two parts: some of the work done over the course of my first year is reported already in the Spring 2005 Bulletin and so here I shall not duplicate that information but add further depth to certain issues and give an overview of our current activity. At the end I would like to make my vision statement for our organization.

The first several months after the May AGM, 2004 was devoted to perusing and digesting the record of past minutes of activity. My first call went to Joanna Estelle, the Treasurer to assist the process of switching the Association's bank account from Vancouver to Ottawa and to get a list of current members. Since I had not been on the Board for at least 6 years, I needed to bring myself up-to-date in all affairs.

The past membership secretary, Sylvia Rickard requested that she have a respite from the Board; we were fortunate to have the membership position taken over by Evelyn Stroobach. To complete the financial switch from Vancouver to Ottawa, I needed to go to Ottawa and to bring with me the necessary background information of the ACWC/AFCC, its Constitution and the minutes of the AGM naming all of the new Board Members and any other appropriate documents received from Janet Danielson and we all needed proper identification. The purpose of my trip to Ottawa at the end of June, 2004 was to open a new bank account and to have three signatories: Joanna, Evelyn and myself. This was prudent because if for any reason Joanna came to any difficulties, then Evelyn would serve as a backup person; we reasoned that the membership secretary would probably from time to time receive cheques which she could immediately deposit. We had a short meeting at Joanna's and the 'ceremonial' handing over of the 'official' ACWC/AFCC address stamp to Evelyn was accomplished.

Upon looking quickly through the financial records and membership list which had arrived from Sherilyn Fritz, it became clear that some work was in process and needed a high priority, some work was incomplete and I needed to know whether we had any outstanding contractual or financial commitments.

As this picture emerged, I began with the realization that after the successful Ottawa Festival, a couple of fallow years had passed. A Canada Council Targeted Initiatives grant for \$5000.00 and a \$1000.00 grant from SOCAN Foundation for the new ACWC/AFCC Web page were incompletely documented and accounted for. Our membership list had not been updated and though there was money in the bank, no financial audit had been done since the Festival. In order to be fiscally prudent, I asked Stella terHart, our Bulletin Editor, to postpone the next issue of the Bulletin until our membership list had been updated and I had contacted all of our members. Once we had received the available information from Vancouver, we compiled our membership lists, the Bulletin's list, and all other sources of information including a large Membership database from the previous Treasurer, Sherilyn Fritz, into a Master List. This has helped us keep track of past dues, address changes and whether any cheques had gotten lost in the transition process.

We had one major telephone conference meeting but mostly relied on on-line Board meetings afterward. In general we cc'd everyone on the Board in lieu of any formal meetings. We addressed responsibilities and immediate deadlines; we did not have the entire picture on some outstanding commitments but it was understood that some work could be started immediately.

CANADA COUNCIL TARGETED INITIATIVES GRANT

General Description

The Canada Council grant represented the largest amount of funds in the bank and therefore had to receive first priority. In brief: the ACWC/AFCC received \$5000.00 to undertake a multifold project consisting of the hiring of specialists. It was to be used for a new Web Page, a Survey, to receive information into the ACWC/AFCC Archive and catalogue its contents, construct a directory and to use the results of all of the above for the Web and the Bulletin. The official title of the project was *Information Gathering and Dissemination*.

The full details pertaining to this grant came in two parts: some of it came in November 2004, but the full file came from Ottawa in February 2005. This was very useful in looking at exactly what the grant had targeted and who was to be hired to fulfill the grant request. It also provided us with what aspects were still incomplete. Upon consulting with Joanna in Ottawa, I was able to prepare a financial image of what the ACWC/AFCC had done with the funds and to contact Shannon Peet of the Canada Council as to how we were going to proceed with completing the final aspects of this grant. This is a Canada Council requirement especially when a grant changes hands and the responsibility changes from one Chair to another. The new Chair then becomes the person responsible for the final report to the Canada Council. This grant has taken too long already to complete; some parts were finished but other portions of the grant had to be downscaled, cut and/or refocused.

Web design

The Web design contract was signed in August, 2004 with Zero Point Designs. Patricia Dirks, our Web Administrator was the main facilitator between Shad Lusted, the designer and the ACWC/AFCC. She assisted in every way to help the process go smoothly and in keeping the Board up to date. Joanna eagle-eyed the final contract and made sure our payments were on time insuring that we did not incur any penalties. The whole Board shared in the decision-making process when decisions had to be made. I am pleased to say that the site was launched in January 2005: www.acwc.ca

Survey

A draft Survey was e-mailed to the entire Board in December 2004. The survey questions prepared by a student were meant to interview "*all of the women composers of Canada.*" Then it was to be submitted to a specialist for final revision. We needed a scientific approach to the questions to ensure that the results of the survey would be credible and objective and form a body of data useful for furthering ACWC/AFCC objectives. We now realize that such a survey constitutes a very ambitious undertaking, requiring research, editing and a more careful and focused set of questions, without duplicating material already available freely from Statistics Canada. Upon consulting with several people knowledgeable in the field of statistic gathering and surveys, the most useful information came from Dr. Judith Taylor of the U of T Women's Studies and Psychology Dept.: she felt that the survey needed a major rethink as to its purpose, more focused, shorter, with a delivery method suitable to the people targeted and styled to produce results and prepared in a more scientific manner from the beginning so that the data collected would be significant and quantifiable.

The Board then decided that the survey, though potentially a valuable initiative, should be undertaken at a later date where we could apply for adequate funds to cover the costs of implementation through either a mail-out, the phone or the web.

Archive

The Bulletin contains my article on the role of the ACWC/AFCC's Archivist, and I invite you read it. It included the material which had been sent in as well as some specific articles. I am very pleased to announce here for the first time in public that a major donation of Archival material on Canadian women Composers — an amazing 14 boxes full has been received from Ina Dennekamp in Vancouver. This represents years and years of work on the music of Canadian women composers. Ina's work was mentioned in the original application for data collection and it was a great pleasure to phone her up and ask what she had in mind to do with it. We had a pleasant and heady chat; apparently she had been accumulating this material in boxes and preparing to make a decision as to where to send it. The CMC was the first choice but I can say from having spoken with numerous people that all of the CMC offices across the country are reassessing the wealth of music they are accepting and that it is no longer an automatic option to simply accept everything which comes from composers. Large Estate donations from known composers are major decisions and some have opted to send their work to the National Archives in Ottawa. This provides a temporary solution but when material comes uncatalogued to the National Archive, it may sit for years and years before it is accessible to any researchers in a catalogue. Work on the Archive is voluntary but there are associated costs. The ACWC/AFCC Archive needs accreditation and I'll be applying to the Ontario Archives to do this in September.

Since Ina's contribution, to date, is by far the largest and most significant donation to date to the ACWC/AFCC Archive, including a wealth of material such as LPs, CDs, reel to reel tapes, scores, books, photos, interviews, other documents and much more that I have not yet had a chance to investigate, I would like to propose that all of her material, once catalogued, be designated the *Ina Dennekamp Collection*. Upon approval from the Board and members here, I would like to present her with a token of our appreciation. I believe she will be visiting the area this summer and that would be an appropriate time to do a press conference and presentation. Joseph Brant Museum, Burlington has suggested that they would be available to hold such an event in their community room and assist with handling a selection of items for this purpose. I'll have a few choice examples on hand. It is too early to give any more information but I'll be working at this in July and beyond.

Further to this, I would like to have material be made available for our Website and Bulletin. A person who is familiar with Archival materials and who is willing to travel to Burlington would be essential to making some of this music available on the Web, subject to proper copyright approval and paperwork trail. This undertaking then would comply with the information gathering and disbursement aspect from the original grant proposal.

Directory

We already have a directory of members on our Website. A printed directory is no longer as important to advertise our organization or an item to be purchased as it once was; people want it on the Web. And this is a work in progress. Each composer has her own entry and this includes in some cases a photo, a bio and a searchable list of works being input by Patricia Dirks, our Web Administrator and "Webmaster". She would appreciate that the formatting be done already in advance in the form suggested in the Bulletin in order to save her time from typing it in.

Patricia has bound and mailed me a hard copy of the material she has received from composers compiled by her and Laura Hoffman our past Web Administrator. Also included is a CD of the old webpage and a back-up for the new one. The new webpage is a vital asset to

being a Member of the ACWC/AFCC where your work as a composer is all in one place; where people, performers, and any other musician can find out where to get it: whether it's at the CMC, at a publisher or from the composer herself.

As for a membership list, the original information sent from Vancouver was completely retyped by Evelyn with corrections and any address, e-mail or telephone changes incorporated into a large Master List; this included payment information. From this list she has made lists of paid members, deceased members and members from whom we have not heard. The lack of communication with members required extra effort to make contact across the country; I phoned the entire list, then sent it to Evelyn. She continued the work and this was rewarded with some responses. This is an ongoing effort of rebuilding and reaffirming our commitment to build the ACWC/AFCC into a strong organization of benefit to all of its members. The lack of involvement and inconsistent engagement between Board and membership has to be vastly improved and we are addressing this as a priority in 2005-2006.

Our Webpage has received funding from the SOCAN Foundation and the cheque was sent upon having received a full report from Joanna. Both the Canada Council and SOCAN Foundation have been prominently credited in our documentation and on our Webpage. We all truly appreciate their support.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

ISCM

The rules for selection to the ISCM were changed a few years ago and the ACWC/AFCC is allowed one composer's work as their representative selection in the Canadian Section's selection package to present to the International jury. Our committee consisted of members of the Board and it gives me great pleasure to say that our choice for this year is Hope Lee's *Voices in Time*. Two CDs of the past ISCM Canadian selections were sent to me from Paul Steenhuisen; I hope funding support to have this year's Canadian composers on a CD continues.

In the future I would like to see that we have the ISCM Canadian Section information sooner so that a call for scores can be presented to the entire membership and a decision made in time to have the representative score at the Canadian Section's office in a timely manner.

Fondazione Adkins Chiti, Donne in Musica

I have striven to maintain and renew contacts with international organizations. More information on the Fondazione Adkins Chiti is in our Bulletin. The ACWC/AFCC is a member of the *International Honour Committee*; a list of members is listed on their Website.

The Foundation represents the creative activities of women in music within the International Music Council of UNESCO, the European Music Council and the European Parliament. The next meeting of the World Music Forum planned by IMC/UNESCO is in Los Angeles in October 1 - 5, 2005. It was requested that countries send a representative work to be included in a Gala Concert on October 3rd; have speakers on panels, present research reports and a book fair for the purchase of music, recordings, etc. to be running at the same time. Musicians from all over the world will be participating and it would be a great way to network and form connections for future possibilities for ACWC/AFCC members to be presented on international stages.

I am expecting more information and maintaining a constant contact with Patricia Chiti via phone, letter and Web since she is trying to organize the conference to be held in the USA from Italy. To date, I know that a brass ensemble from Alaska will be performing a Brass Quintet by Violet Archer; this will be the representative piece from Canada representing the ACWC/AFCC – Dr. Archer was a member of the ACWC/AFCC and we know that her

composition is a strong choice for the Gala Concert to an international audience. Ideally we should also have a person from the ACWC/AFCC there to represent our interests; I am in the process of looking for funding support for this trip. The Bulletin will have more information in its Fall issue.

AFFILIATIONS with other composer organizations

IAWM

We have affiliation with the **International Alliance of Women in Music (IAWM)** and exchange Newsletters, scholarly and conference information and competitions. As a side bar I would like to say that our Bulletin Editor: Stella terHart is also the printer for the IAWM journal. We should be quite proud of the fact that our newsletter has over the years improved steadily and it has a professional look and feel which will garner attention to our organization and attract new members.

CLC/LCC

The **Canadian League of Composers (CLC/LCC)** has been very helpful in including the ACWC/AFCC when it comes to matters which impact all composers. For the first time ever, John Burge, President of the CLC/LCC and I will be exchanging Presidential annual reports. I have received his and made a few copies for anyone who is interested. I shall be sending him mine after the AGM and it will be included or in the next Bulletin. I'll be conferring with Stella terHart our Bulletin editor as to the best method to broadcast this report.

I think this exchange of reports is a step forward in demonstrating that composers stand together on issues of mutual concern; a unified voice is very effective to show funding agencies and policy makers that when it comes to issues which affect **all** composers that we, the ACWC/AFCC are equally informed and can speak to the issues representing the interests of our Members. There is some overlap in that the CLC includes members from our Association but we also have members who have chosen us as their sole composer service organization. In order for everyone's interests to be served, the ACWC/AFCC also has to be a part of the process in order that we can effectively voice our opinions when the time comes for decisions to be made which have an impact on all composers whether they are female or male.

I'm hoping to make the same contact with the **CEC** in the future.

CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS

Most bodies organized for social, scholarly, charitable or similar purposes function adequately under constitution and by-laws of their own devising. However an organization that grows to significant size either in terms of membership or develops characteristics involving financial responsibilities, public exposure, etc., may find it necessary or desirable to acquire a legal existence as a means of being competent to transact its affairs with, and of being protected by, statutory authority.

There are special provisions in both the federal and provincial Companies Acts for the incorporation of organizations of a non-profit nature formed to carry on the interests of their members. There are formal procedures to be observed in making application for incorporation and if we are thinking of taking this step, we require legal advice and employ legal services if it is decided to proceed.

To this end I decided to type up the Constitution and By-laws. I found that little had changed since 1981 but incorporated all changes which had been documented. I shall be distributing it to the new Board after the AGM. This needs to be discussed, amended as necessary and rethought. By this time next year I would like to see a revised version which can be distributed to the entire Membership. We are accountable to our members and this will show how we operate, how we function at the Board and committee level and how members can best serve their Association and we them.

The ACWC/AFCC operates under the *Bourinot's Rules of Order*. Sir John George Bourinot was a one time Clerk of the House of Commons and his short manual on the practices and usages of the House of Commons of Canada and on the procedure at public assemblies, including meetings of shareholders and directors of companies and other gatherings was first prepared in 1894. When I started as secretary to the ACWC/AFCC, this was the manual I used to learn how to run a meeting, take minutes and how to solve problems when they arise. I suggest we have each new secretary own a copy in order that we maintain a consistency in keeping records.

New Members

I am pleased to announce that we have two new members: Dr. Maya Badian and Anne Bourne. More information on them and any other new members will be in the next Bulletin.

Thanks to Board Members

I would like to thank the two Board members who are stepping down: Linda C. Smith and Jocelyn Morlock. They have served their terms well on the Board and assisted in maintaining a continuity between the previous and new Boards. Linda has recently spent a lot of time working on the *Open Ears Festival* and we should be grateful that her persistence also allowed the ACWC/AFCC to have the AGM at the CMC by receiving the key and other necessary security procedures and razzmatazz.

Jocelyn's minutes were the primary source for my forming a good picture of the ACWC/AFCC functioning at the Board level. I came to appreciate her sense of what issues needed to be fully included in the record and what could be summarized in a few choice sentences. Thank you to both of you for the time you put into the Board in the service of the members of the ACWC/AFCC.

VISION

1. I would like to improve communication with our membership and keep them better informed about our activities. The new web site will be instrumental in giving up-to-date information, competitions, links and any calls for scores or reports from across the country. Its searchable database will grow as more members send in their information. The role of the Bulletin will be as a forum for more "think" articles, sections devoted to performances or other activities by our members. Both serve as outreach instruments for the Association.

Advertising and subscription revenues will offset some of the cost of producing the Bulletin and I would like to have government support as well. We shall be applying for grants, since the Bulletin also represents a form of marketing of our organization and a method by which to attract new members.

Our Membership list will be made available to our Members so that we can improve communication even amongst ourselves. This will be mailed out in the next Bulletin.

2. The ACWC/AFCC has to increase its profile both nationally and internationally. For this to happen we need operational and core funding to assist in improving contact with the Board whether it is through face to face meeting or by telephone conferencing or both. At least once a year, we should endeavor to have a meeting where some of the costs associated with travel could be covered. Canada is a large country and it is hard to be a close-knit organization when all of the administration is done solely through e-mails; this is very time-consuming and slow when a phone call is still more intuitive and immediate. When Carolyn Lomax founded the Association, there were only a handful of women; we have now about 75 members across the country and abroad with new members joining every year.

Funds for travel would also heighten our visibility at international events. It would be ideal if not only the Chair could travel but representatives from the Board or from the membership could stand in as the ACWC/AFCC representative at important events.

3. Major granting organizations require that applicants be incorporated or be in the process of doing so and to also have charitable non-profit status. For example: the funding application for the Department of Canadian Heritage requires to know the legal status of the organization and whether it is registered with the Canadian Customs and Revenue Agency as a Charitable Organization. We are connected to the Canadian Foundation of Women Composers which supports us and whose charitable status has allowed donors to receive a tax receipt. I would like to see the incorporation issue discussed at a committee level with more information and what steps need to be taken to start the process.

4. I would like the ACWC/AFCC to form collaborative partnerships with other organizations in support of projects involving the performance and promotion of the music of our members. Our web site will develop into a great resource for presenters looking specifically for women composers. I would also like to see more performer members who taken an active interest in the programming of our music as a matter of course.

5. The ACWC/AFCC should have a greater diversification in its membership. More flavours make for a better soup and we need more spice and variety. I would like to broaden our definition of a *composer* while still maintaining our support for the highest professional standards of music creation in order to reflect the Canadian multi-cultural reality in our membership. I would like to have a membership recruitment committee committed to thinking how we can attract and connect with women of different cultural backgrounds.

CONCLUSION

In closing, I would like to thank all of the Board members for their hard work and efforts throughout the year. There is a momentum which has started and it should be sustained. Over the course of the year I have worn all the hats in turn of each position and now I would like to concentrate more on the big picture and the direction that the Association should be taking. Board members are like Ministers responsible for their respective portfolios. I like to take a hands off approach and allow individuals to place their own stamp in their own area of responsibility. The hardest part is over, we have new Members, new Board members, a new webpage, the Bulletin has been sent and the Association is set to play a more significant role on the Canadian and International music scene.

Thank you very much.

Submitted by Elma Miller
Chair/President
25 June 2005