

Dear Readers,

Herewith another issue of the IASA Journal packed with knowledge and shared experience. Our last conference, held in Frankfurt in September 2011, carried the title “Digital sense and nonsense: digital decision making in sound and audiovisual collections”. Our keynote speaker, Ute Schwens (director of the German National Library, one of the hosts of the conference), gave a very clearly laid out justification for the need for a digitization strategy at the highest level. Her paper is included here in full.

Similarly, though in an entirely different context, we learn from Álvaro Hegewisch (Fonoteca Nacional de México and new IASA membership vice-president) and Xilonen Luna (Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas, México) of attempts at the national level to introduce and disseminate standards and best practices for sound and audiovisual archiving across a country and a region, using the knowledge and expertise within IASA. Keeping at that high level, we get advice on decision-making on storage strategies from world leaders, Matthew Addis, Mariusz Jacyno, Martin Hall-May (IT Innovation Centre, University of Southampton) and Richard Wright (BBC Research and Development). And finally, we have Cassandra Gallegos’ paper highlighting the importance of not just collecting but really reading and *listening* to what data collected about our collections is telling us so that we can make better informed decisions.

At project level, Stefan Kaltseis and Anton Hubauer’s (Österreichische Mediathek) paper on tape dehydration, as opposed to baking, offers a practical and cheap solution to the, well, *sticky* question of sticky shed syndrome. When this paper was presented at the conference in Frankfurt, there was much discussion and debate. It struck me that this is an area we could usefully continue to debate and share ideas and experiences on. I hope this paper helps to kick that discussion off.

And once again we have a project presentation from Richard Ranft (British Library). While this presents another of the Library’s attempts at public engagement and crowdsourcing, it fits with our theme of making sense and nonsense by exploring the meaning of these attempts and how they assist us as archivists in making sense of our collections.

Finally, in IASA Journal 37, we included a cornerstone article that introduced the potential future of our Cataloguing Committee, now the Organising Knowledge Task Force. Guy Maréchal and Simon Rooks presented the theory and principles of the Semantic Web. In this issue Fran Alexander (Taxonomy Manager, BBC Information and Archives) furthers our understanding by simplifying, explaining terminologies and providing practical examples of engaging with those theories and principles. I, for one, have found this very helpful. I hope you will too.

2011 was an election year and you will see from our President’s letter in the following pages that there have been some changes to the Executive Board. Of relevance here is that we have a new editor. Cassandra Gallegos holds a Master of Science in Information Studies as well as a Certificate of Advanced Study in Preservation Administration. She has worked in the digitisation department at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center in Austin, Texas and at George Blood Audio and Video, where she has been concerned with digitisation standards and best practices. IASA will be in good hands with Cassandra as editor.

This means that I bow out with this issue, which has been treated as a hand-over issue. Cassandra will be all set to go it alone on issue 39 due out in June/July 2012. I’d ask you all to assist her by sending in your suggestions and contributions for the journal. I wish Cassandra all the very best with this challenging and rewarding position and I wish you all informative and happy reading into the future!

Yours truly,  
Janet Topp Fargion  
Editor IASA (Out-going)

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Dear Readers,

I am both excited and honoured to be taking over as editor of the IASA journal. Over the past few months, I've observed the excellent work that Janet does in preparation for the journal and if I perform these duties half as well as she does then I am confident that my time as editor will be successful. I look forward to working with and learning from all the members of the IASA executive board as well from the IASA membership. I attended my first IASA conference this past September in Frankfurt. Never before have I met such a welcoming and intelligent group of people. Thank you all for making me feel as if I truly belong in the world of audio archiving.

Sincerely,  
Cassandra Gallegos  
Editor IASA (In-coming)