

ACM History Committee Meeting Minutes, November 15, 2021 (v. 1)

Welcome (Owens)

- Meeting began at 11:00am EDT / 8:05am PDT via Zoom

1. Attendees (Owens)

- Barbara Boucher Owens (chair)
- Vicki Almstrum
- Troy Astarte
- Judith Bishop
- Carol Hutchins
- Roy Levin
- Anna Loup
- Erik Rau
- Kim Tracy
- Mary Whitton
- Amanda Wick
- Jeffrey Yost
- Chuck House (guest)

Not in attendance

- David Brock
- Sachin Maheshwari

We started the meeting with each member briefly introducing themselves for the new committee members, Troy Asatarte and Anna Loup.

2. Minutes from October 2021 meeting (Almstrum)

- October 18, 2021 minutes: Discussion and approval deferred until December meeting.
- Vicki's teaching schedule conflicts with the HC meeting time in February, March, and April. Anna and Troy volunteered to provide their notes for the meetings, with Vicki doing a final pass while listening to recording.
- For Vicki Hanson's presentation, we will keep the redacted version of the file in the minutes folder for the October meeting. Vicki Almstrum will add the PNG images from Vicki Hanson's presentation as an appendix of the document with the October minutes.

3. Brief updates on committee work

a. Budget and Finances (Whitton, Rau)

- The latest budget was approved.

- The committee is currently unable to view the status of spending. It would be helpful to be able to view the budget status in “real time”. This is an important issue and must be solved.
- Chuck will present his end-of-year report for the ACM Award Video project at the next meeting.

b. Publicity (Hutchins, Almstrum)

- Carol emphasized the importance of a primary contact person at ACM HQ to help us connect into ACM’s overall strategy and to ensure information about the History Committee work is communicated more broadly.
- Kim suggested the ACM 75th Anniversary celebration as a point where we can make progress with setting up the publicity connection.
- We have no subcommittee for publicity. Erik expressed concern regarding potential mission creep and suggests that we be wary. Carol agreed to be the “owner” of this issue.
- Vicki reminded us that part of this discussion began after she discovered that the ACM “history” page was incorrectly attributed to the History Committee, an update introduced during a recent web update for ACM. (The background is captured in the folder “History of ACM project” in the HC Operations drive.)
- Carol suggested calling this effort “outreach” rather than “publicity”, given the difference from traditional PR work. The main goal should be to increase awareness within other parts of ACM for History Committee projects.
- Mary suggested that we add this as a standing agenda item.

c. Turing update (Levin)

- Most of the recent work with the Turing project has been carried by David Jefferson and David Brock.
- The current strategy is to do interviews where they can be accomplished without long-distance travel, including Pat Hanrahan and Judea Pearl. The Pearl interview has been started but is incomplete. Given his age, we are prioritizing this one.
- The two interviews currently planned will be in conjunction with the Computer History Museum and David Brock will be the interviewer. The costs will be shared between the Computer History Museum and the History Committee. The only costs for the History Committee for these two interviews will be for travel.
- Troy reminded us that they can be brought to service for interviews in (the vicinity of) the United Kingdom. If we are successful arranging an interview with Tim Berners-Lee, Troy can be a part of that.

d. Web work, including ACM page update (Tracy, Owens)

- Kim has updated the website to show recent changes regarding the fellowships. He has also figured out how to set up alias email addresses. The new addresses are questions@history.acm.org and fellowship@history.acm.org.

- Anna has confirmed with Frannie that they give permission to add an anonymized version of their proposal to the Fellowship area of the website. (ACTION ITEM: Anna and Kim)

e. Heritage Project + Preservation Outreach (Almstrum, Wick)

- Very little progress.
 - Expect to complete the planning framework for the workshop / Zoom event by December.
 - Must begin seeking speakers by February.
 - Call for participants should go out by late February or early March.
- Must plan project budget to include in the new committee budget.

f. Global (Maheshwari, Hutchins)

- We noted that Vicki Hanson's visit to the committee last month lacked information about global activities. One example of the challenge is a perception within ACM Europe that ACM is a US organization that happens to have an outpost in Europe; provides a precaution that must be addressed. There are also perceptions that Europeans underrepresented on award committees and as awardees.
- ACTION ITEM: Barb will approach Vicki Hanson to ask how ACM is trying to move forward with global activities. One question will be how ACM groups from outside of the USA view themselves.
- Judith offered the alternate view that perhaps it is most important for the History Committee to focus on what the History Committee does. She observed that it is attractive that the History Committee is setting up frameworks that all SIGs and ACM sub-organizations anywhere can hook into.

g. ACM Award Video Series (House)

- Chuck reviewed the back-up process he went through in the summer, which included recordings, transcripts, and vignettes from 62 interviews.
- Vicki and Barb had received their back-ups, but the one to Amanda (for CBI) had gone awry. Chuck is preparing new disks for Amanda and for David Brock.
- Chuck has made additional progress with the remaining interviews. He is encouraged that the first stage of this project should be completed by the end of the year.
- Anna described the AI transcription package they use, Trint (<https://trint.com/>), and reported that it works very well. Anna has unlimited access to this tool and offered to help with committee projects. Chuck described the similar program he has been using, which does not transcribe well when the speaker speaks English with a strong accent.
- ACTION ITEM: Chuck will work with Anna to compare process and results.

h. Other?

- No additional points.

4. Workshop planning (Whitton, Almstrum)

- Vicki had already discussed several aspects of this during the Heritage item.
- We are in agreement that this will be an on-line event (probably Zoom) rather than in-person.
- ACTION ITEM to all: if you've participated in Zoom workshops / conferences, we should collect ideas for best practices. We might also consider whether we should use an outside service to facilitate the event.
- Anna's partner runs large internet conferences online and knows many open source platforms that involve no cost. Anna will meet with Vicki and Amanda to discuss some options.

5. Fellowship announcement (Tracy, Whitton)

- During the December meeting, we will talk about this year's fellowship process and talk about the evaluation process, as well as bringing the new members up to speed on the process we use to evaluate the applications. This will be a major point for the December meeting.
- Pending item: Create an example using Anna and Frannie's proposal as an example of a successful proposal.

6. Additional business

- We discussed whether to reschedule the December meeting, perhaps a week earlier, but this would clash with academic calendars.
- We noted that the January meeting will fall on January 17, the MLK holiday in the USA.

7. Upcoming meetings

Monday, December 20, 2021, 11:00 am EDT via Zoom

8. Conclusion 12:00 pm EDT / 9:00 am PDT