ACM History Committee Meeting Minutes, October 17, 2023

Welcome (Owens)

- Meeting began at 12:00pm EDT / 9:00am PDT via Zoom

1. Attendees (Owens)

- Barbara Boucher Owens (chair)
- Vicki Almstrum
- Troy Astarte
- David Brock
- Jonathan Grudin
- Carol Hutchins
- ac Loup
- Sachin Maheshwari
- John Tucker
- Jeffrey Yost
- Chuck House (guest)

Not in attendance

- Kim Tracy

2. Minutes status (Secretariat / Almstrum, Astarte)

- August 15, 2023 minutes: As of Nov. 14, only 5 votes to approve.
- September 19, 2023 minutes: As of Nov. 14, 8 votes to approve.
- Kim has added the July 2023 minutes to the HC website.
- We discussed the value of having more than one person taking notes during the meeting. Vicki has found that different people hear and capture different aspects.
- We discussed the balance between completeness and avoiding publishing sensitive information to the website in the final notes. The practice of having rough notes captured by at least one other committee member helps overcome this limitation.

3. Committee membership and recruitment (Owens)

- Discussed several candidates for membership in the HC, as well as sharing background information about each and keeping in mind the goal for a diverse collection of members.
- Agreement to invite Andrew Meade McGee as a committee member. He has recently taken a position at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.
- We discussed subcommittee assignments only briefly. Key questions: Is everyone satisfied with their current subcommittee assignment? Do we need more people power in any of the positions?

4. Brief updates on committee work

a. Secretariat
- The Secretariat did not add any points beyond the earlier discussion of the minutes.

b. Fellowship (Tracy, Whitton)
- Vicki shared that the draft call has been updated and is ready for review.
- Jeff volunteered to share on SHOT, while Troy will share via the Commission for the History and Philosophy of Computing.
- Vicki pointed out the need to discuss the number of awards and amount of the awards as we prepare to do the budgeting for FY2025.
- David suggested that the fellowship award should be distributed as a stipend, rather than a strict reimbursement basis. Troy followed up with some of the issues that have come up in the past, including the concern that institutional management of fellowship funds could reduce the amount that goes directly to the recipient. During discussion, we noted clear advantages for recipients. The only disadvantage to this change could be if it would be harder to obtain the final reports, but Kim does not feel this differs from what has happened in the past.
- David will follow up with ACM HQ regarding the tax implications and seek guidance. He prefers that the funding should go directly to the applicants.

c. Budget and Finance (Brock, Astarte)
- Troy and David are transitioning into this subcommittee. They met with Erik and Mary before the September meeting to get their help and advice.
- David reported that Darren Ramdin, the budget person he and Troy met with at ACM HQ, said the budget planning for the next fiscal year will take place in February.
- David has added information about travel expense reimbursement to the appropriate folder in the HC Operations drive.

d. Turing Awardee History Project (Brock)
- David and Frannie are working to set up the details of the Ullman interview.
- The plan for the Butler Lampson interview is set. As the interviewer, David will seek to round out the information already included in other oral history interviews.
- Sometimes in March, Ken Thompson has agreed to sit for an interview.

e. ACM Key Awards Video Series (House)
- Chuck reported that he is quickly approaching the number of interviews he has been commissioned to do and expects to finish in June 2024.
- Important to establish a continuing support fund to continue doing the interviews as new awards are made.

- He plans to prepare a presentation showing the follow-on options for this project so we can better plan for what to do with these oral histories and how best to make them accessible to the public. Tom Haigh's work with "snippets" inspires Chuck as he contemplates methods for making interview content more easily accessible.
- Some ideas that emerged from the discussion:
  - Virtual museum showcase
  - Snippets similar to those Tom Haigh has done for the Turing interviews.
  - Themed interviews joined together into an article.
  - Producing a short video compilation
- Troy noted that the AIT (IT Archives) writes popular readership pieces to compile bits from various interviews based on a theme and also creates few-minute videos, for example https://archivesit.org.uk/75-years-of-human-computer-interaction-and-its-impact-on-society/
- Is there a master repository of oral histories anywhere? With voluminous oral history material held at distinct repositories, this information could be made more accessible with a single general cross-index. We discussed alternatives for how to pursue such a thing and decided a white paper would be a good place to start; no specific action item assigned as yet.

f. Heritage Project (Almstrum, Loup, Grudin)

- Jonathan will pursue the copyright permissions needed for adding the processed videos to our new Heritage Insights series, as well as the possibility of associated articles.
- Vicki is still pursuing contact with and advice from Craig Rodkin (ACM DL).
- Vicki is still seeking a service to help process the video recordings so they can be posted. Several avenues of possibility: Craig Rodkin; ac's information about a video free-lance service; David and Jeff checking connections through their respective institutions.

g. Global (Maheshwari, Hutchins)

- The procedures for transferring the funds for the India project are progressing.
- Barb, Carol, and Sachin will set up a time to meet and ensure everyone knows how to follow these procedures for reimbursement for expenses and payment of stipends, etc.

h. Outreach, Marketing, Web presence (Hutchins, Tracy)

- Nothing new to report.

i. DEIA follow-up

- We had spoken earlier about DEIA in the context of committee member recruitment.

j. Curriculum input

- Discussion earlier in the meeting considered the curriculum efforts and the possibility to influence how to ensure history has an appropriate position in what students are expected to learn. John suggested inviting Brett Becker to talk to the HC about the new ACM curriculum due to the latter's role in the development of the new curriculum.
- Suggestion: Set up a subcommittee to pursue this. John will be the chair, with Barb, Vicki, and anyone else interested as members. As a starting point, John wants to know how much the HC already is invested and interested in the curriculum.
- In a related observation, John asked how the HC ensures that the materials we produce have a role in education, e.g., posters for school teachers (as has been done at Swansea). Barb responded that outside advisors could be useful here and that she has a good network for this.

k. Other?

- HC planning for face-to-face meeting
  - Barb has been working on details of holding a F2G meeting in the first half of 2024 in NYC. An important factor: ACM staff is only in the office Tuesday through Thursday. We discussed meeting in April or May and staying at the Renaissance, where senior discounts can give price breaks.
- ACM Press books idea (from Chuck) — Deferred.

5. Pending issues

- Digital Preservation Strategy, History of ACM webpage(s), Timeline idea
  - Timeline: Troy proposes to set up a student project to explore this idea. It is still pending, but we all agreed this was a promising idea for how to pursue this topic further.

6. Additional business

- Chuck shared an email update on the two talks he presented to the U.N. General Assembly about work he has done collecting health data. Herewith a summary:
  - In his first talk, as part of a panel, Chuck gave a 10-minute overview of tools he developed for geo-spatial modeling for COPD and Emphysema. These tools 'discovered' the sub-micron particulate issue thirty years before the AMA and CDC acknowledged the issue. Another panelist was Jerome Adams, the Surgeon General for the USA from 2017-2021.
  - In his second talk, Chuck did a half-hour "Deep Dive" to describe the COVID-19 Dashboard inspired by being himself the first case of Covid in his county during the pandemic (https://anywhereanytime.us/covid19c/). He and a partner collected more than 6.7 million datasets, for every day of a three-year period, for every county in the US and 198 countries. They then computed per capita data

and portrayed geo-spatial maps alongside linear and logarithmic time series graphs and selected data tables.

- During his second presentation, he showcased the AVI Exposition Center with 50+ screens at a Virtual 30' diagonal, to illustrate geo-spatial or Choropleth tools with the database. During our Heritage Workshop in September 2022, Chuck shared with the HC preliminary work with a 3D immersive Virtual Museum; that is available as one of the environments from AVI, AstroVirtual Inc. (https://www.astrovirtual.com/)
- Here is a link to a recording of the talk. Chuck recommends forcing the setting to 1080 viewing quality (using the little gear at the bottom) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z63I88yOUIc

7. Next meeting Tuesday, November 21, 12:00 noon EST via Zoom

- NOTE: The end of Summertime / Daylight Saving Time is October 29 in Europe, November 5 in the USA

8. Conclusion 1:00 pm EDT