



Adults Learning Mathematics - a Research Forum

Annual Report ALM/AGM 2001

Please reply to:

Venue: Roskilde University,
Denmark Date: 28 June 2001

Chair's Report 2001

The eighth annual conference of ALM is the occasion for this year's AGM. As we reflect upon the past year it is fair to say that ALM continues to make a difference in adult mathematics education internationally through its members and its activities. Members will realize that ALM, as an association, has been undergoing a process of change since achieving company/charity status, mainly as regards its administration and the conduct of its business. Efforts to improve ALM in all respects have been proceeding apace and I am happy to report successes on several fronts. On the administration front better arrangements for trustees' meetings have been put in place with a schedule for email and face-to-face meetings. Dates have been agreed for the membership year, accounting and reporting year, and financially ALM is in reasonable shape as our accounts will confirm.

The objects of ALM in adult mathematics education have been pursued with vigour throughout the past year. Tine Wedege and her team have done a wonderful job organizing ALM-8. Our annual international conference is a flagship event for the association and as such demands much attention and care which it duly gets year after year. ALM now has a significant presence on the web thanks to the efforts of Mieke van Groenistijn and further development of this website is planned in the coming year by the trustees.

On the publications front ALM proceedings are much sought after and ALM-7 proceedings are due out in June 2001. The ALM newsletter is growing in stature and credit is due to the editorial team for improvements in quality and presentation. An ALM sponsored book *Adult and Life-long Education in Mathematics: papers from ICME9 working group for action (WGA6)*, will be available in June. It is a pleasure to acknowledge book publications from members Jeff Evans and Iddo Gal. It is clear that ALM, through its members, is making a significant contribution to the literature in adult mathematics education.

There are some new developments that are worthy of mention and support. ALM opened a new discussion list for members with a special interest in vocational education and I am sure this will attract wider interest among researchers and practitioners in the field. Some of you will be aware that ALM members in the London area have been organizing local events for practitioners/researchers. These activities complement the work of ALM and are to be welcomed. Also, a new initiative is under consideration viz. an ALM journal and members' views will be sought at the AGM.

Finally, as outgoing chairperson, I would like to thank all the trustees for their support throughout my tenure and acknowledge their contribution, and the contribution of ordinary members, to the success of ALM.

John O'Donoghue, ALM Chair
University of Limerick, Ireland

Company Secretary Report 2001

I am happy to report that there is very little to say about our new formal status as a company and as a charity. I am happy because having little to report means that the formal business of the organisation has proceeded well and there are no problems or difficulties to bring to the Annual General Meeting.

Our thanks must still go to Dhamma Colwell who put in so much work to establish the new structure. In her report last year she indicated that the Trustees were still in the process of developing "working methods". We have been able to establish a process in which we have email discussions, and decisions are then formalised in writing, so that we comply with our legal obligations.

It may be useful to point out that though both Companies House and the Charity Commission require us to report on our financial situation and details of the people elected, the way we structure our decision making can be decided as we wish.

It may also be useful to clarify some terms that are used. The 'old' ALM had an organising committee called the "Steering Group". This same group is now called the "Trustees", as that is the name given by the Charity Commission to the people named as being responsible for the organisation. The Trustees are also "Directors" of the Company (Adults Learning Mathematics - a research forum). We are a "limited company" but are allowed to write our name without 'Ltd' after it.

We used to have a constitution, which said what we did and how we were organised. We now have a "Memorandum of Association" which describes what we do - called "the Objects"; and the "Articles of Association" which are the rules of the organisation.

As company secretary I see myself as having three main functions. One is to ensure we provide Companies House and the Charity Commission with all appropriate information (in conjunction with the Treasurer). Secondly, it is to ensure that all our decisions and activities are within our stated objectives. Thirdly I help all the Trustees be aware of the advantages that our new status provides. One of the most important of these is that as a charity it is easier for us to raise and appeal for money to support our activities.

David Kaye, ALM company secretary

Treasurer's Report May 2001

This year has been the first full year since ALM's re-formation as a Company Limited by Guarantee and as a Charity. There have been a few problems with the change of bank account which has meant that standing orders have been returned. The membership secretary now has this under control and some members are being asked to sign a new standing order form.

We have a healthy bank balance owing to an effective subsidy for ALM6. This is held largely in a current account with interest. I have held discussions with the bank about splitting the balance and putting some of the money into a deposit account, but the net gains are minimal owing to the variable (and relatively low) interest rates.

Sales of past proceedings have produced an income of about #200 this year.

Payments for the Web site have to be made through a Dutch intermediary. We have agreed that invoices should be issued twice yearly rather than monthly since a #10 fee on each bank draft is payable.

ALM 7 produced a profit of about three thousand dollars which is welcome and will mean that it is possible for the organisation to extend its newsletter plans and maintain the Web site which is proving to be successful.

We are now required to produce an annual statement of accounts for both Companies House and for the Charity Commission. This is in hand and an accountant has been appointed by the Trustees to prepare these on our behalf.

For the forthcoming year it will be important to re-establish a maximum number of members paying through Standing Order. It will also be necessary to reconsider the membership rates for those not in the UK. It is clear that we may need to establish differential rates depending upon relative income norms. This has been a particular problem for New Zealand members. It is proposed that this is discussed at the AGM.

A statement of accounts will be distributed to members at the AGM.

Professor Sylvia Johnson, ALM Treasurer
School of Education, Sheffield Hallam University, UK