



Administration and record-keeping

ILZE SWART

Chairman of the Friends Indaba (an umbrella organisation for all the Friends groups in the City of Cape Town)

Letterhead

Design a letterhead on the computer, giving due consideration to the logo and font. A logo helps to establish the Friends brand in your community, so put it on your publications, whether a letterhead, receipts, newsletter, notices, et cetera. (See previous article, in May/June 2012 **CL**, page 63) – Bellville logo designed by artist and illustrator, Piet Grobler).

Use the same font in your regular publications. Some examples: **Friends** (Comic Sans); **Friends** (Lucida Sans Unicode); **Friends** (Times New Roman); **Friends** (Arial); **Friends** (Trebuchet); **Friends** (Verdana). Do read Simon Garfield's **Just my type: a book about fonts**. You will never look at words in quite the same way ever again!

Membership records

Membership card

A laminated membership card the size of a credit card can easily be produced as all libraries have laminating machines for library cards. Ensure that it looks neat and professional.

List of members

A list of members can be done in Word or Excel. Details should include name, home address, e-mail address, telephone numbers and date on which the current subscription fee has been paid, with a receipt number. Communication with members regarding interesting events, news, new material, et cetera, is important. Postage is costly, so communicate by e-mail or sms wherever possible. Keep a copy of all newsletters as a record of your Friends' activities.

Administrative files

Records of meetings

The constitution will have clauses about types of meetings and their frequency. Hard copies of agendas and minutes should be kept on file of:

- ☑ executive committee meetings: the Exco meeting is at the heart of Friends operations, as all matters pertaining to Friends affairs will be raised here: approval of expenditure, activities to be undertaken, report back on projects. The librarian-in-charge should give an overview of library activities, and motivate, with quotations, for any purchases requested on behalf of the library. An example of an agenda can be found at the end of the article
- ☑ special general meetings
- ☑ annual general meetings: the chairman's report delivered at the annual general meeting should provide an overview of Friends' activities during the past year. This can be circulated, not only to Friends, but library management and the press. An invaluable tip from a former chairman: add a sentence to the notice of an annual general meeting (which is often badly attended) that, if there is not a quorum at the time of the meeting, a new meeting is reconvened five minutes after the original one, at which the members present will constitute a quorum
- ☑ Indaba annual general meetings: a report back on Indaba activities and communications should be part of the chairman's feedback to his Executive Committee.

I wrote a history of the Bellville Friends for their 40th birthday in 2010. I would not have been able to do it without the complete files of minutes and financial statements as references.

Statistics

Keep an attendance register where all Friends record the dates and times they have worked in the library and what they have done. The number of hours worked should be included in the chairman's report and council be made aware of the time put in by Friends as volunteers.

Correspondence

Correspondence can take place with members, the municipality, library management, donors, et cetera. Particularly where finances or events are concerned, confirm in writing the dates, times, fees and service to be delivered, so that Friends are not surprised after an event by unexpected costs. After a business meeting it is advisable to send an e-mail to the participants confirming the salient points and decisions taken or agreements made.

Cultivate good relationships with your local press, and make sure that you send your press releases and photos in the format required and within the deadlines stipulated.

Album

Keep one as a record of Friends' activities, with clippings from newspapers, invitations to events, photographs of activities.

Memory stick

Save all electronic documents pertaining to Friends on a memory stick, which can be passed from one secretary to another. This does not replace hard copies on a file.

Flip file

Keep a flip file with copies of Friends' documents for ease of reference:

- names and contact details of executive committee and Indaba committee members
- constitution (and charter; if a City of Cape Town Library)
- current financial statements
- agenda and minutes of latest executive committee meeting
- current issues/correspondence/quotations
- membership list.

Financial record-keeping will be covered in the next article.

References

<http://www.ala.org/altaff/friends/factsheets>

<http://www.foia.org.au>

Example of agenda

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY
TO BE HELD ONATAT
.....LIBRARY

Details about the location of the meeting

A G E N D A

1. Welcome and apologies
2. Approval of minutes of previous Executive Committee meeting
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Functions/Activities
5. Report back from librarian-in-charge
6. Finances (Treasurer)
7. Wish list with quotations (Librarian-in-charge)
8. General/New issues
9. Next meeting

Details about what will be discussed during the meeting