

## ANGLICAN JOURNAL BOARD/COMMITTEE OF THE ANGLICAN JOURNAL REPORT TO GENERAL SYNOD

This past triennium was a time of significant transition and change for the Journal and the Board/Committee. The major changes have been the un-incorporation of the Anglican Journal Board (AJB), and the impact of the financial difficulties of General Synod.

The biggest change was the un-incorporation of the Anglican Journal Board (AJB) as a separate legal entity. The former AJB is now the Committee of the Anglican Journal (CAJ). It is comprised of the same members who make up the Communication and Information Resource Committee (CIRC). This was achieved by a motion at the fall meeting of the Council of General Synod (COGS) in 2011. I want to thank the General Synod Chancellor, David Jones, for all his assistance as this legal process unfolded. Prior to the un-incorporation, a full independent audit of the Journal's financials was completed, a corporate requirement that had been overlooked since the incorporation of the AJB. The previous AJB audits had been part of General Synod's audit. During the triennium, the AJB met three times, once face to face and twice by conference call. The CAJ then met three times concurrently with CIRC, once face to face and twice by conference call.

The on-going financial struggles facing General Synod have overshadowed the day to day operation of the Journal. Like all other departments, there have been cutbacks. Added to these challenges is the slowly declining readership of the print Journal. In October 2010 there were 167,397 subscribers. That number declined to 152,090 by November 2012. In the end, this led to the decision to reduce the Journal from sixteen pages to twelve pages, leaving less space both for Journal articles and for advertising. Advertising revenue has suffered especially in 2012.

The Journal staff has creatively adapted to these challenges. Under the leadership of Editor Kristin Jenkins and her very able staff, the Journal has seen a wonderful transformation in both content and design. In addition, the Journal web page was re-designed. This has resulted in a much stronger and effective web presence.

In the spring of 2011, Kristin Jenkins, Martha Asselin, a partner in M & M International, and Michelle Hauser, from our Department of Philanthropy, introduced the AJB to a five year business plan. This was a proactive initiative to help deal with the increasing financial restraints. A sub-committee of the AJB was struck to continue this work. The plan included looking at a number of options for the Journal including moving to a paid subscription model. This sub-committee has evolved into the Media Strategy Group. We are grateful to the Ministry Investment Fund (MIF) which funded the expenses to complete the business plan.

At the spring 2011 meeting we continued talking about our readership survey. A pilot survey was done at General Synod in Halifax in 2010. In 2011/12 a broader survey was produced in consultation with all of the Diocesan Editors, as the survey included questions about the Journal and the reader's Diocesan newspaper. Over 3,000 replies were received, and a comprehensive report was presented by Michelle Hauser at our spring 2012 meeting. The demographics indicated that the average reader was a single, retired female aged 65-74. There was a marked bias towards the diocesan paper in most who took the

survey. The survey also indicated that 64% of respondents would consider a paid subscription. For full survey results see the Journal website, [www.anglicanjournal.com](http://www.anglicanjournal.com).

The Journal receives significant financial support from Heritage Canada each year which reduces the cost of postage for the Journal and the Diocesan Newspapers' distribution. It is important to remember that all of the Diocesan Newspapers are distributed as an insert in the Journal. The Heritage Canada grant has been reduced from over \$500,000 in 2010 to \$400,000 in 2013. Bev Murphy, our Circulation Manager, anticipates that this grant figure will now remain stable for the foreseeable future as Heritage Canada has completed its grant restructuring.

In 2012, after a great deal of work by Saskia Fielder, our Art Director, the Journal moved to a new printer. There has been nothing but positive feedback from readers and Diocesan Editors. The Diocesan newspapers are printed by the same printer. The move has allowed for clearer copy and colour throughout the paper.

The Journal continues to rely on the generosity of subscribers who respond each year to the Journal Appeal. The appeal in 2012 focused on the relationship between the Journal and the Diocesan papers and resulted in a \$60,000 increase over the previous year.

The Journal staff continues to produce the annual Church Calendar. The calendar continues to be a popular item for Anglicans.

In December 2012 Kristin Jenkins resigned as Editor of the Journal. The CAJ is very thankful for the leadership she provided as Editor. In early January 2013 Paul Feheley was appointed as Interim Editor.

The Journal staff has been working on preparing for the Joint Assembly in Ottawa in July 2013. A grant from MIF has funded an additional staff person for 27 weeks who will report on Anglican-Lutheran initiatives leading up to the Joint Assembly.

I want to take this opportunity to extend a very sincere word of thanks to the Journal staff: Paul Feheley, Interim Editor; Bev Murphy, Circulation Manager; Saskia Fielder, Art Director; Larry Gee, Advertising; Janet Thomas, Assistant to the Editor and Coordinator/Manager of ABC publishing; staff writers Marites (Tess) Sison and Leigh Anne Williams; and all who contribute to the award winning Journal. In addition to the Journal staff, my thanks to the Director of Communications, Sam Carriere, and the staff of the Communications and Information Resources department.

There are many challenges that lie ahead for the Journal as an independent publication. Although it is clear from our readership survey that a significant number of Anglicans across the country rely on the printed journal, the world of communications is shifting. Electronic print and social networking are putting pressure on all print publications. The financial realities facing General Synod may result in us simply no longer being able to afford a print format Journal. Such a decision though, would in all likelihood, result in the demise of most, if not all, of the diocesan newspapers.

The other often overlooked reality is that a web only Journal requires significant funding. The Journal would still need an Editor, writers, graphic artists, and probably a fulltime web manager. Much of the

postage for a print Journal is paid for by Heritage Canada. The challenge ahead for the next CAJ will be to discern the best path to follow into the future.

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to have served as President of the AJB and now as Chair of the Committee of the Anglican Journal for the past six years. Thanks to all those who have served with me on the Board/Committee over the past three years.

+George Elliott