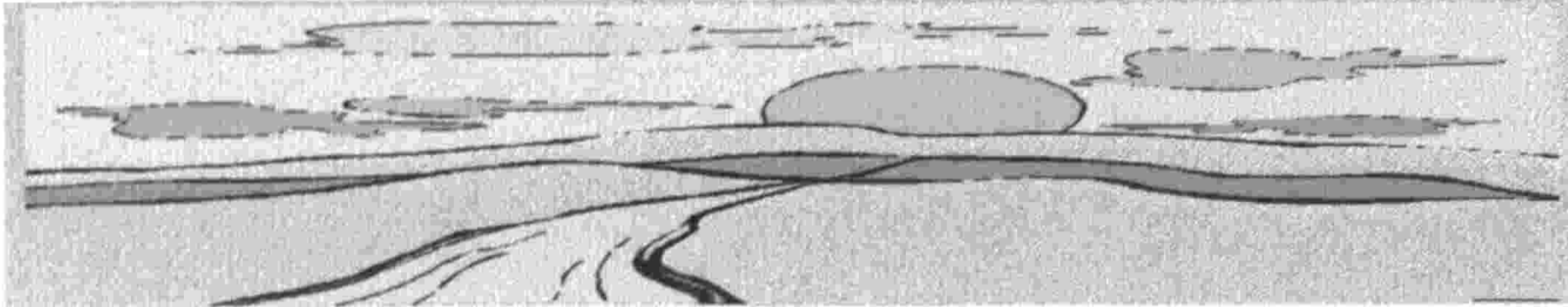


CHAPTER 5: CHANGING OF THE GUARD – THE DAWNING OF A NEW GENERATION



A new year dawned with every expectation of success, resolve in meeting new challenges, and increasing membership rolls for our young association. It was Bob's final year as President; and his enthusiasm had not diminished one iota. In his newsletter message of February, 1987 (Vol 2 No 1), he congratulated those who "had the wisdom and foresight" to attend our annual meeting in Charlottesville. His zest for VAGARA business was further reflected in his characterization of that event. "It was not just an opportunity to participate in excellent presentations but also a great chance to meet with other information and records managers." "That's the value of VAGARA", he wrote. Bob declared that VAGARA "...provides a meaningful NETWORK to share; to learn; to make useful contacts among your peers."

That newsletter edition was Madeline's first; and it featured news notes relating to Richmond's grant application to fund a records management program, the latest arrangements for the SARC meeting in Orlando (Fla.), the Library of Virginia's cultural exchange program with Brazil, records management practices in Norfolk, getting program support, and, of course, those "records management funnies", which included "Father Time" carrying a placard with the message, "THE WORLD WILL END AS SOON AS THE PAPER WORK IS DONE."

A significant part of that newsletter included the State Archives' 1986 Records Management Survey Report for Local Governments, which summarized five recommended actions for local initiatives. In short, implementation would involve drafting and adopting a records management ordinance, appointing a records manager, conducting a records inventory, designating a records storage facility, and justifying filming applications. A copy of a model ordinance was attached. VAGARA had once again assisted the Commonwealth in executing its mandate through the distribution of vital records management information to members in every corner of the "Old Dominion".

The next meeting of the board was held at Mary Washington College and, without hesitation, Bob asked for a call to order, approved previous minutes, and ordered the reading of the fiscal report. Our bank balance was a respectable "\$2,114.00"!

Plans were rapidly progressing, according to Bill Wolchak (Prince William County), to ensure a solid base for the Virginia Beach Conference, which was scheduled for 24-26 October 1987, our first three day affair. With the outline of designated

costs, anticipated income, facility check, luncheon arrangements, registration requirements, and a local tour to highlight the event, all seemed in order for another successful effort.

Election of officers appeared on the agenda for the first time since that Williamsburg vote in 1985 which empowered the initial board. The "changing of the guard" was imminent; and Bob selected Bea Berry to lead the Nominating Committee in drafting a new slate of candidates who would assume leadership duties.

As usual, Bob focused his attention of State issues; and Dick announced that the "new" designation for the Archives would be "Virginia State Library and Archives". Moreover, changes in the Public Records Act to include a ten year retention period for medical records was being proposed to the legislature for passage.

Under consideration as an agenda item was also a motion to change the name of our association and logo. Bob appointed a committee, which was composed of Dick, Jane Cross, and Bill Powell, to study the issue and make recommendations, subject to member approval, for the annual meeting. This undertaking was our version of "fun with Dick and Jane".

Madeline was busy gathering informative articles for the June edition of the newsletter. In that issue (Vol 2 No 2), she headlined a story about the Veterans Administration's unlawful disposal of "thousands of documents" in a judgment handed down by a federal court judge in San Francisco. From Prescott Valley (Arizona) came news of an investigation "into apparent sabotage of computerized financial records", which destroyed a portion of that city's accounting documentation. Apparently, in an attempt to keep the membership abreast of national records developments, the editor reported on a "new technology" initiated by the DeKalb County (Ga.) police department. Optical disk technology was being used by that locality's law enforcement group to "identify crime suspects" thereby replacing the "traditional police lineup" with a newfangled device giving police a more "accurate way" of apprehending a suspect. From the University of Maryland at College Park, moreover, were "reports of a new clearinghouse of microcomputer software information for local governments." Madeline had scoped the nation in just nine pages!

A close up view of that issue also produced some good old down home news. Ron Livingston's article on the existence of off-the-shelf software stressed the multi-faceted role of the

personal computer in the workplace and in the family study. He provided some valuable shopping tips for the appropriate software package. Ron was the Clerk of the Court from Chesterfield County and the first elected official to write for our newsletter.

A two page section followed Ron's article on grant guidelines for obtaining funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission. It was a news piece on support types, funding categories, program administration, application criteria, and deadlines.

The summer of 1987 found us meeting in Richmond, where the previous minutes were approved without dissent. The financial report contained good news to the tune of \$2,108.57. With those opening volleys, Bob presided over what was to be his final meeting as President. With preliminaries over, we turned our attention to the Nominating Committee report. Jane Cross (Chesterfield), Sue Woo (State Library and Archives), and Delia Arnold (Stafford County) were nominating members for the year. New faces always seemed to appear without notice.

A motion over by-laws revisions, which proposed that the outgoing president maintain ex-officio status on the board, was approved unanimously. Other items encompassed a brief report on our Virginia Beach plans, the State Archives' preservation workshop for local records managers and archivists, and the NAGARA meeting scheduled for Atlanta in July 1987.

On the first day of that month, Bea Berry sent a memorandum to all members notifying them of the annual meeting. Moreover, she introduced the proposed slate of new officers: President - Dr. George A. Hruneni (Fairfax); Vice President - Bill Wolchak (Prince William); Secretary - Mary I. Chinchello (Norfolk); Treasurer - William Powell (Virginia State Library & Archives); for at-large-members, Ron Livingston (Chesterfield) and Bea Berry (Newport News). Jane Cross and Madeline Conway remained as at-large-members to complete their terms.

It was also mentioned that Section 601 Article VI was to be amended to permit the "immediate past president" to claim ex officio status on the board. Bea advised us to "be prepared to vote" on the candidate slate and by-law revision. Virginia Beach was only two months away!