
AASR Up-date

President's Report 1988

This year has seen the appearance of the *Australian Religion Studies REVIEW*. Again Victor Hayes has had innovative insight in this new publications enterprise. On behalf of the entire association I would like to extend our great appreciation to Penny McKibbin for the superb editorial work in the two numbers that have appeared. In a time of restricted funding I think the *REVIEW* will take on added significance in the future. As money becomes less available for conference travel, the association will increasingly depend on the *REVIEW* as the mechanism for sharing research interests and results as well as news about teaching and other activities in and by individuals and academic departments across Australia. I encourage all those who are asked to contribute to the *REVIEW* to make this a significant priority in their work and to help the editor to meet deadlines.

I have been greatly encouraged to see the interest in Western Australia to stage next year's annual conference in Perth. News of new positions opening up in Western Australia underlies the important role that religion is taking in staffing tertiary institutions there. We are looking forward to travelling to Perth and to making acquaintance with many of the people interested in the study of religion. According to reports from Enid Adam, Iain Gardner and Paul Stange, preparations are well under way.

As we look to move beyond the parochial borders of the east coast in staging the conference, I would like to make a suggestion for the future. I think that the

AASR should consider staging a conference in the not too distant future in Singapore, Hong Kong or perhaps some other venue in Asia. The purpose would be for the AASR to mount a conference in which we would invite other societies and academics from Asian Universities. Such a conference would open up relationships with Asian academics which would not only provide an important opportunity for many of us to deepen our learning about religion in Asia but would also provide important opportunities for research endeavours and for the possible exchange of students and staff. To promote such a contact in the study of religion is important for all of us at a time when Asian studies are becoming increasingly important and are increasingly receiving a significant amount of tertiary funding.

If I might turn to a more mundane matter. For the past two years treasury matters have been handled in Brisbane and secretarial matters have been handled in Adelaide. (In the 1987 annual meeting it was voted to split the office of Secretary/Treasurer into two offices.) While this situation worked relatively smoothly, it has become increasingly apparent that having the secretary in one city and the treasurer in another has not only added extra work for those holding the positions but has also meant delay in the processing of dues payments, the paying of bills, etc. As a result I am suggesting that the organization establish the convention that both of these positions be filled by people from the same city. It would make the

routine operation of the society more efficient. It would also help resolve problems when different interpretations of procedures occur. A local phone call or a personal meeting can resolve issues promptly that could take weeks by correspondence.

Finally, I think that we have to recognize how demoralizing many of our jobs have become because of the centralization of control of tertiary education in Canberra and the resulting changes in priority. Those of us who do not know much about engineering or sheep dip have found ourselves even more devalued than has been the case in the past. I want, therefore, to close by urging that in an Association such as this we must work together. If we value what many others do not - the importance of identifying religion as a significant area of enquiry - we

will strengthen this endeavour when we work in harmony. This is not a time for us to find value in our own area of competence while devaluing others. This is a Society for the study of religions, and yet such an enquiry will be successful only when we realize that we are all engaged in the common study of religion.

Lastly, may I extend my appreciation to Ray Harrison who has served the Association as Secretary/Treasurer and Secretary for the last two years. He has worked diligently and has often prompted one to take action on matters that might otherwise have been forgotten. I would also like to thank the other officers in the association, Victor Hayes, Enid Adams and especially Rod Bucknell who has often given very helpful advice.

— *Edgar W. Conrad*

From The Secretary

There is little to report from the new occupant of a chair recently vacated by the able figure of Raymond Harrison. My value will, I think, consist largely in my physical proximity to Drs. Conrad and Bucknell, so that the business of the Executive can be expedited.

To introduce myself, I am an Anglican priest with a strong commitment to the study of Religion. My background is in the Physical Sciences and Theology, and I am presently a PhD student and Tutor in

Studies in Religion at the University of Queensland.

My only "official words" ...

- news from Professor Tony Johns that the ANU will be happy to host the Annual AASR Conference in 1990 on dates to be announced.
- and the return of AASR subscriptions. Thanks to those who have replied so promptly, and a nudge to the remaining 200!

— *Scott Cowdell*

Minutes of the AASR Annual General Meeting 3 September 1988, 4:00 pm

1. Opening Remarks

Dr. Edgar Conrad, President AASR, opened the Annual Meeting and welcomed members on the occasion of the 13th Annual Conference 1988, being held at the Women's College, University of Queensland.

2. Agenda

The agenda, as prepared by the President, was submitted and approved.

3. Attendance

Apologies for absence were submitted and received from Philip Almond, P. Bilimoria, Ray Harrison, Basil Moore, and Paul Rule. There were 21 members present.

4. Minutes of Annual Meeting 1987

It was moved seconded and agreed that the Minutes, as printed in the *ARS REVIEW* and further circulated at the meeting, be taken as read and confirmed.

5. President's Report

The President reviewed his first year in office and drew particular attention to:

- a. the appearance of the *ARS REVIEW* and the particular debt owed to Penny McKibbin and Victor Hayes for this publication, which is likely to increase in importance as funding cuts reduce opportunities for face to face exchanges of views and news between academics;
- b. the considerable interest in Western Australia in the 1989 conference being held there, along with the significance of staffing appointments being made there in the Religious Studies area;
- c. the need for the AASR to take under

serious consideration the holding of a future conference in an Asian location;

- d. the recognition of the advantages to accrue from having the AASR Secretary and Treasurer located in the same city to facilitate efficient conduct of business;
- e. the necessity for common effort from all members to sustain the study of religion in Australian academia in the face of the challenges emerging in current circumstances and mooted Federal Government priorities. It was moved, seconded and agreed that the report be received.

6. Secretary's Report

The meeting approved the appointment of Ian Gillman as acting minute secretary in the absence of Ray Harrison. The Secretary's Report was circulated among members. The President reported that the Executive had taken up all of the recommendations made in the report and had put in hand actions where it was considered appropriate.

It was noted from the report that as of 3 July 1988 there was a total of 342 members, including 45 student members, 296 paying the full rate of dues and 20 institutions doing likewise. The comparative figures for 1987 were 343, 58, 284 and 27 respectively, showing little change in overall numbers.

The meeting placed on record its thanks to Ray Harrison for his work as Secretary over the past two years and it was moved, seconded and agreed that his report be received.

7. Treasurer's Report

Rod Bucknell presented a statement of

income and expenditure for the period 1 July 1987 to 30 June 1988 see last issue of *REVIEW*. *Inter alia* the statement showed an increase in the end of year credit balance from \$8,018.75 to \$11,259.49, but the Treasurer pointed out that it was anticipated that such a sum was necessary to meet initial outlays for the expenses of publications and for the costs of the *ARS REVIEW*, which latter is expected to cost some \$5,000 p.a.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that the Treasurer's Report, duly audited, be received and adopted.

8. Membership Dues

Following discussion and recommendations from the Executive it was moved, seconded and agreed that the membership dues for this year be increased as follows: Full members and institutions

\$30 p.a.

Student members and the unwaged

\$15 p.a.

9. In the light of the decision about membership dues the Treasurer submitted a proposed budget (see page 27) showing anticipated income of \$16,600 and expenditure of \$16,100.

It was moved, seconded and agreed to adopt such a budget.

10. Publications Committee Report

Victor Hayes presented a detailed report covering sales and stock situations, together with an overview of the publications program 1976-1988. It was noted that virtually the only volume on which it seems likely that the AASR will not at least recoup its outlays is that covering the IAHR Congress, *viz. Identity Issues and World Religions*. Particular attention was drawn to the appearance of the *REVIEW* and of the one publication for the 1987-88 period, the significant volume edited by Rose and Swain and entitled *Aboriginal*

Australians and Christian Missions.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that:

- a. the report be received and the Publications Committee and its Chairman be congratulated;
- b. Penny McKibbin be reappointed as Editor of the *ARS REVIEW* for 1989. The meeting noted that the Chairman of the Publications Committee and the Editor of the *REVIEW* will confer on the appointment of an editorial committee for the *REVIEW* to report to the Executive through the Publications Committee.

11. Women and Religion Caucus Report

Penny McKibbin reported orally on the meeting of the Caucus that afternoon and on the progress to date, including:

- the protest at the discontinuation of adequate provision for feminist perspectives at IAHR Congresses;
- the continuation of a women's section at AASR Conferences;
- the support provided for female post-graduate students who face problems with their programmes of study;
- the fact that the role of women in AASR committees has received acceptance;
- the possibility of volumes produced by the Publications Committee being written and/or edited by women, with attention drawn to the role of Deborah Bird Rose in the most recent AASR publication.

It was moved, seconded and agreed that the report be received.

12. Conference Proposals

- a. Perth Conference 1989: Iain Gardner, as chairperson of the planning committee, reported on progress re the Perth conference, September 27 - October 1, 1989 on the University of Western Aus-

tralia campus. It was noted that there would be some overlap with the ANZSTS Conference from September 25-29 and that some joint arrangements were under discussion.

Suggestions were received relating to transport arrangements from South Australia and the eastern states, with a view to cost reduction to encourage attendance from these areas.

b. 1990 Conference: it was noted that no invitation had been received as yet to mount this conference in Canberra, as would be indicated by the usual roster. The Executive was requested to pursue this issue, and if it proved that a Canberra location was not practicable to seek reactions from Sydney as to the possibility of it hosting the conference in 1990.

c. A Conference in Asia: The President raised again the matter referred to in his report, pointing out that the time seemed ripe not least because of emphases on Asian studies, to consider the possibility of locating an AASR Conference in Asia. Sites in India, Thailand and Indonesia were raised as possibilities, and the financial difficulties facing Asian scholars noted. It was agreed to keep this matter on the agenda throughout 1988-89 with a view to a firmer proposal at the next AGM.

13. IAHR Membership

The President raised with the meeting the issue of continuation of AASR membership in the IAHR. He did so in part because of the difficulties met by the Secretary and the Treasurer in dealing with that body's re-affiliation dues and also because of other problems, not the

least of which has been the IAHR attitude to adequate provision for feminist perspectives at its congresses. As with the matter of an Asian venue for an AASR Conference, he thought that this was a matter for consideration over the next 12 month period, during which options could be sought prior to further consideration at the next AGM.

Discussion ensued, and it was moved, seconded and agreed that in the interim:

The AASR, as a member association, requests the IAHR to ensure that adequate provision for the feminist critique of religious issues be made in forthcoming IAHR congresses.

14. Election of Officers for 1988-89

The report of the Nominations Committee as circulated with the last copy of the *ARS REVIEW* was received and the following were elected to the listed posts for 1988-89:

President: Edgar W. Conrad (Qld)

Vice-President: Enid Adam (WA)

Secretary: Scott Cowdell (Qld)

Treasurer: Rod Bucknell (Qld)

Chairperson, National Conference Programme Committee: Iain Gardner (WA)

Chairperson, Publications Committee: Victor Hayes (SA)

It was noted that the following are also members of the Executive Committee:

Immediate Past President:

Robert Crotty (SA)

Immediate Past Conference Chairperson: Philip Almond (Qld)

15. Close

There being no further business, and the President, having been thanked for his conduct of the meeting, closed it at 5:40 pm.

— Ian Gillman

AASR
Projected Budget
for the Period 1 July 1988 to 30 June 1989

<u>Balance carried forward, 1 July 1988</u>		
Uni Credit Union account		\$11259.49
 <u>Add Income</u>		
Membership fees	9500.00	
Book sales	4000.00	
Publication Assistance Grant	1500.00	
1988 Conference surplus	600.00	
Interest: Uni Credit Union	<u>1000.00</u>	<u>16600.00</u>
		\$27859.49
 <u>Less Expenditure</u>		
Postage and Secretarial costs	1300.00	
REVIEW production costs	5000.00	
Book production costs	8000.00	
Members' Directory	1000.00	
IAHR affiliation	200.00	
1989 Conference advance	<u>600.00</u>	<u>16100.00</u>
<u>Estimated balance at 30 June 1989</u>		<u>\$11759.49</u>

The above estimates are based on an assumed increase in annual membership fees to \$30 (full rate) and \$15 (student rate).

— Rod Bucknell
Treasurer
24 August 1988

AASR PUBLICATIONS — A SATELLITE SUMMARY
 Here is what has happened to the 15,692 volumes produced during AASR's first 12 years (1976-1988)

Publication	Number Printed	Free to Members	Other Free*	Number Sold	Volumes in Stock (to 19 June 1988)
Guide to Religion Studies in Australia (1976)	270	65	-	200	(5) sold out (1978)
Toward Theology in an Australian Context (1979)	1,010	242	41	722	(5) sold out (1980)
Australian Essays in World Religions (May 1977)	748	192	151*	400	(5) sold out (1986)
Let Sleeping Snakes Lie (Brennan) (Sept. 1977)	1,100	175	145*	618	162
Central Australian Religion (Strehlow) (1978, 1980)	1,534	207	38	1,287	(2) sold out (1982)
Central Australian Religion, Third Printing (1983)	1,000	75	-	783	142
Powers, Plumes and Piglets (Habel) (April 1980)	1,020	248	46	724	(2) sold out (1982)
Powers, Plumes and Piglets, Second Printing (1983)	1,000	-	123	520	467
Religious Experience in World Religions (June 1980)	1,010	275	34	415	286
Ways of Transcendence (Dowdy) (March 1982)	1,000	296	48	311	345
Religion in Australian Life: Bibliography (August 1982)	1,000	-	148	708	144*
High Calling, High Stress: Bibliography (August 1982)	1,000	-	270	535	195
Introduction to Maori Religion (Irwin) (January 1984)	1,000	302	37	656	(5) sold out (1985)
Introduction to Maori Religion, Second Printing (1985)	1,000	-	-	538	462
Identity Issues HB (300)					
Identity Issues PB (1986)(700)	1,000	320	40	182	458
Interpreting Aboriginal Religion (Swain) (1985)	1,000	310	15	468	207
Cumulative Totals at August 1987	15,692	2,707*	1,026	9,068	2,891

Impressions - AASR 13th Annual Conference 1988

"Aren't you staying for the fireworks?" asked an incredulous gatekeeper as I left Expo in the early afternoon. "You must have somewhere important to go!" I assured him I had, and headed for the Women's College at the University of Queensland. There others were arriving to participate in three days' study and discussion of religion. The greeting of friends over afternoon tea and dinner was followed by a pleasant lakeside walk to hear the Charles Strong Lecture by Dr. Deborah Bird Rose from the Australian National University. 'Ned Kelly Died for our Sins' was a lecture delivered with bold strokes yet sensitivity to an Aboriginal religious response to colonisation. Familiar ideas about Ned Kelly as bushranger were held in suspension as Deborah, with a story and analysis, enabled us to appreciate an Aboriginal reaction as the oppressed, to the religion and power of British settlement in Australia.

Friday was taken up with sectional papers until the late afternoon when another lakeside walk took us back in time to the Mandaean. Junior Charles Strong Scholar, Sister Majella Fanzmann, tutor and doctoral student at the University of Queensland, delivered a lecture on "Living Water: Mediating Element in Mandaean Myth and Ritual". Majella described the mythological genesis of the concept of 'living water', its function in the world of Light and its sending forth into the world of Darkness. Secondly, Majella showed with examples the function of this 'living water' within the ritual prayers of baptism. Special prayers were said for the opening and calming of the Jordan, threefold baptism and signing with the name of Life in an active river, Baptism was seen as efficacious in offering protection. 'Living water' in both myth

and ritual is the symbolic mediating element between Light and Darkness.

On Friday and Saturday we were treated to a great variety of papers. The largest sections were Sociology of Religion, and Judaism, Christianity and Islam. But excellent papers by both academic staff and students were heard in all sections. Some focussed on the past: Biblical and Buddhist texts, an early mosque and ancestor worship, adding historical perspectives to present knowledge.

Other papers were concerned with the present: practices of Vipassanā meditation, Indonesian mysticism, Quakers, Pentecostalism and radical religious movements. The Christian Church is challenged by Kung, science, women, the New Right, prostitution and a changing image to moralism. What of the future? We heard of new sky heroes, post-modernity and post-religion. Will we then be out of business?

The Annual General Meeting was marked by two new developments: the first being the election of a Secretary and Treasurer from the same State (gone are the days when they were miraculously and exhaustingly contained within the person of Penny McKibbin). The other, which delighted all women present, was the motion (passed with no dissent) that the AASR "request the IAHR to ensure that adequate provision for the feminist critique of religious issues be made in the forthcoming IAHR Congresses." Consideration will be given to the benefits of being affiliated with an international organization which neglects to include provision for feminist critiques in its major meetings despite requests and complaints from individual members. At a conference at which all plenary speakers were women, this move was both timely

and welcome.

After the diversity of papers we were ready for the formal dinner, a time of good food and friendship, and the after dinner speech by Eileen Barker whose presence added warmth and vivacity to the conference. In her speech on 'New Religions and Kingdoms of Heaven on Earth', Eileen began by describing the views of such movements about society, its wrongs, the movements' ideals and plans for their implementation. Using her research experience with the Unification Church, she showed the internal dynamics for change within a single movement, from millenarianism to utopianism and revivalism. Refusing to be drawn into giving meaningless typologies of sects and participants, Eileen presented the differences within each, their attraction for various people and the diversity of

reactions to critical events within each group. But realistically she warned that the "socio-illogies of the single-minded pursuit of a single ideal" could lead to either "the cage of freedom" or "freedom of the cage".

A lasting impression I have of Eileen Barker is her generosity in sharing her personal experiences in research with others, the cost involved and the contribution she is able to make nationally in the United Kingdom as adviser on new religious groups to community and Government. Hers is an inspiring example to follow.

Thank you, staff of the University of Queensland, especially Ed and Rod, for a memorable and enjoyable conference.

— Enid Adam
Vice President, AASR



The Constitution on The Australian Association for the Study of Religions 1976 As amended June 1987

I. Name

Australian Association for the Study of Religions

II. Purpose

The Association exists

1. to develop a community of persons with common interests in the scholarly understanding of religion and religions
2. to promote creative developments in the field of Religion Studies in Australia by:
 - a) stimulating scholarship and research
 - b) disseminating information about current programmes and studies
 - c) supporting publication of scholarly works and articles
 - d) encouraging the establishment and maintenance of effective teaching.

III. Membership

1. Membership will be in the following classes:
 - a) Full Membership. Persons interested in research, study or teaching in the field of Religion may be admitted to full membership in the Association upon application to the Association Executive.
 - b) Student Membership. Tertiary students engaged in the study of religion may be admitted to Student Membership in the Association upon application to the Association Executive and payment of Student Membership Dues.
 - c) Honorary Membership. Persons who have rendered distinguished service in or to the Study of Religion whether resident in Australia or elsewhere, may be elected with their consent to Honorary Membership. The Honorary Members elected in any calendar year may

not exceed two, and the total number of Honorary Members may not exceed 5% of the Association's membership.

- d) Members Emeriti. Emeritus membership is open to persons who have reached retirement.
2. Applications for membership (III.1.(a), (b), (d) shall be made on the Official Application form obtained from the Secretary.
3. At the Annual Meeting the Secretary shall present an annual report of the membership of each class, and the Treasurer shall present an annual report and audited financial statement.

IV. Dues

Full Membership and Student Membership Dues shall be fixed by a vote of the membership at an Annual Meeting. Dues shall be payable as soon as possible after the Annual General Meeting.

V. Meetings

1. The Association shall hold an Annual Meeting for the transaction of business.
2. A National Conference shall be held annually OR less frequently as the Executive shall determine. The aim of the National Conferences shall be to promote the purposes of the Association through public presentations or seminars and scholarly papers or forums.
3. The Annual Business Meeting shall be held during the period of the National Conference in those years in which a National Conference is held.
4. Meetings of Regional Branches of the Association may be scheduled locally in accordance with local needs or interests.

VI. Regional Branches

1. Regional Branches, consisting of members of the Association residing in a particular region, may be organised, in consultation with the Association Executive, for the purposes stated in Article II.

VII. Affiliations

1. Upon majority vote of the Annual Meeting, the Association may affiliate with and participate in other organisations concerned with the study of religion, and other organisations whose disciplines contribute to the understanding of religion.
2. Affiliated groups may be given space in the programmes of the Association's National and Regional Meetings at the discretion of the appropriate Programme Committees.

VIII. Officers

1. The Officers of the Association shall be:
President Vice-President
Secretary Treasurer
Chairperson of the National Conference Programme Committee and
Chairperson of the Publications Committee.
They shall be elected by the Association at the Annual Meeting.
2. Nominations for the offices shall be made by a Nominations Committee. Nominations shall be announced to the membership along with the mailed announcement of the Annual Meeting. Additional nominations for any office may be made from the floor of the Annual Meeting.
3. Tenure of all officers shall commence immediately at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting and terminate at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting of the following year. The office of President shall not be filled by the

same person for more than two years in succession.

IX. Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee may be identical with the Executive Committee.

X. Correspondents

A correspondent may be nominated locally by Association members in a State, Territory or Region, and endorsed by the Annual Meeting.

XI. Executive Committee

1. Between Annual Meetings, the oversight of the affairs and business of the Association shall be in the hands of an Executive Committee.
2. The membership of the Executive Committee shall be the officers of the Association plus the Immediate Past President and the Immediate Past Conference Chairperson.

XII. National Conference Programme Committee

1. The Programme Committee shall be responsible for planning a National Conference.
2. Programme Committee membership shall consist of
 - a) a Chairperson
 - b) a Secretary-Treasurer in the host city or region
 - c) persons co-opted locally by the Programme Chairperson to form a working committee.

XIII. Sections

1. The Executive Committee may approve the formation, reformation, and dissolution of Sections, understood as a group of members with scholarly interests in a particular area of or approach to the study of religion.
2. Each Section shall have a Chairperson responsible to the Programme Com-

mittee and Executive Committee.

3. Any group of members may propose the creation of an Association Section.

XIV. Publications Committee

1. The Association shall establish a Publications Committee, with one member being designated as Chairperson.
2. The Committee, as authorized and directed by the Executive Committee shall
 - a) publish the work of Australian scholars in Religion as this becomes feasible
 - b) publish the Proceedings of the Association as directed by the Association
 - c) make available Association publications and, where possible, other books and journals in religion, at a discounted price to Association members.
3. The Publications Committee shall be competent to invite Australian scholars to serve in an Advisory Editorial capacity.

XV. Changes to Constitution

1. Proposed changes to the Constitution must be submitted to the Executive Committee at least three months before the Annual Meeting, and must be circulated by the Executive to the membership at least one month before the Annual Meeting.
2. Changes to the Constitution may be effected by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present at an Annual Meeting.

This Constitution was considered at the General Business Meeting held on Saturday August 21, 1976 during the Association's Inaugural National Conference in Adelaide. Dr. Norman Habel presided and 71 persons were in attendance. The Constitution was adopted unanimously. It was amended in August 1987 when the former Secretary-Treasurer executive position was expanded into two separate executive responsibilities.