

# AASR Update

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## Minutes of the 18th Annual General Meeting of the Australian Association for the Study of Religions, at the University of New England - Armidale, 3 July 1993

### Present

31 members

### Apologies

Brian Grenier, Vic Hayes, Basil Moore,  
and Paul Stange.

### Minutes of Annual Meeting 15 July 1992

The minutes as printed in ARS REVIEW  
5, 2: 43-5 were taken as read. There were  
no amendments. Confirmation of the min-  
utes was moved Jacky Angus, seconded  
Bob Crotty.

### President's report (Paul Rule)

### Secretary's report ('Tricia Blombery)

See below. Penny Magee asked the meet-  
ing to pay tribute to 'Tricia's work as Sec-  
retary.

Business arising from the reportThe meet-  
ing accepted the resignation of Peter Ben-  
tley as administrative assistant. It was  
resolved that A.A.S.R. funds (\$600.00 in  
last year) be used for 'Tricia to employ  
occasional help (Habel, Thom).

### Financial report ('Tricia Blombery)

See below.

Business arising from the report.

1. Membership Fees: The Treasurer did  
not wish to recommend an increase in  
fees for 1993/4, but asked the meeting to  
note that the cost per member in 1992/3  
was \$42.00. At present this shortfall, and  
the subsidy for student members is met  
from sale of books. Members were urged  
to encourage their colleagues and students  
to join the A.A.S.R.

Eileen Byrne raised the issue of a scale of  
fees according to salary. Norman Habel  
recommend that the Executive present a  
proposal to the next annual meeting about  
fees.

2. 'Unwaged' members: 'Tricia said that  
because we did not define 'unwaged' in

the last annual meeting, more people than expected had placed themselves within this category, e.g. sessional teachers. It was recommended that the Executive define or retitle this category for the next renewal notice.

3. New Zealand subs: Jane Simpson suggested that if we wish to increase our membership in New Zealand we need to decide on how fees will be paid for those who do not have Australian bank accounts. The proposal that AASR take out a credit card facility was considered impractical. Further suggestions were that Jane act as a clearing house, or that we could give the AASR bank account number to overseas members for direct deposits. The Executive will discuss how New Zealand subs could be charged.

4. Signatories to cheque account: 'Tricia asked permission to retain Peter Bentley as a signatory for AASR cheques. Moved by Norman Habel, seconded by Catherine Thom, and accepted.

### **Publications Committee report (Vic Hayes)**

'Tricia Blombery presented the report in Vic's absence. See below. Paul Rule moved a vote of formal thanks to Vic for all his work over the years.

DiscussionThe discrepancy between this report and the amount noted in the annual financial report is due to some book sales by the secretary. The next book, edited by Penny Magee and Morny Joy, is due in December. Norman Habel reported that a Festschrift for Colin Badger, to be prepared and funded by the Charles Strong Trust, would be appropriate for a future publication.

Penny Magee asked how active the committee was. It was recommended that the

Executive prepare a proposal for the next AGM with suggestions for restructuring of the committee and plans for improved distribution arrangements for AASR publications.

### **Women's Caucus report (Erin White)**

See below. Penny Magee confirmed her willingness to remain as the co-ordinator of Women's Caucus information for new members.

### **Elections**

Nominations were called by Paul Rule for positions on the Executive.

President: Alan Black ('Tricia Blombery, Paul Rule) elected unopposed.

Vice President: Jane Simpson re-elected. Her major role will be liaising with members in New Zealand.

Secretary: 'Tricia Blombery re-elected.

Treasurer: Neville Jarvis elected unopposed.

Publications Committee chair: Vic Hayes re-elected.

### **Constitutional change**

It was resolved that the amendments, circulated to members in April 1993 in accordance with the due notice required by the constitution, be incorporated in the constitution.

The amendments (Blombery, Habel) incorporated read:

To add 'V: Assets and Income

1. Non-profit clause:

The assets and income of the association shall be applied solely in furtherance of its above mentioned objectives and no portion shall be distributed directly or in-

## Treasurer's Report

*Financial Statement for 1 July 1992 - 30 June 1993*

<b>Balance brought forward 1 July 1992</b>		
Westpac advantage saver	3185.77	
Westpac term deposit	<u>7000.00</u>	<u>10 185.77</u>
<b>Add income</b>		
Membership fees	9007.13	
Sales of books	7570.39	
Sales of REVIEW	89.96	
REVIEW advertising	60.00	
Bank interest	663.45	
1992 conference surplus	<u>35.40</u>	<u>17 426.33</u>
		27 612.10
<b>Less expenditure</b>		
Wages	640.00	
Administration	201.45	
Postage - administration	682.55	
Telephone - admin	44.83	
Bank charges	26.92	
REVIEW - printing	5213.00	
- production	2370.00	
- stationery	125.00	
- postage	1093.30	
Book publishing	5597.95	
1993 conference advance	1000.00	
IAHR membership 1992, 1993	<u>924.29</u>	<u>17 919.29</u>

### **Balance carried forward 30 June 1993**

Westpac advantage saver      9 692.81

The treasurer reported that there would be no request for increased membership fees this year. However, she stressed that members should be aware that expenses directly related to member benefits last year were \$42 per financial member. The shortfall for members, and the considerably subsidy to students and 'unwaged' members, had met from the sale of books which should, in principle, be invested towards the cost of future publications.

## Publications Committee Report

for period 1 July 1992 - 30 March 1993

### Expenditures

Total Production costs for 1,000 copies of *Religion and Multiculturalism in Australia* \$11 098

### Income

Total income from book sales  
(9 months: July 92 - March 93) \$6 439.94

### Notes

1. Eleven AASR titles are still in print. Six others have sold out.
2. In 9 months over 500 copies of *Religion and Multiculturalism in Australia* have been distributed - 402 in sales (for a return of \$5,072.82), plus copies to authors and review copies. Two institutions are known to have adopted this title as a text.
3. Our next title is *Claiming our Rites: Australian Feminist Essays in Religious Studies*, edited by Penny Magee and Mornay Joy, due out by December 1993.

Victor C Hayes  
Chair, Publications Committee

directly to the members of the organisation except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the organisation.

#### 2. Dissolution clause:

In the event of the association being dissolved, the amount which remains after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, shall be paid and applied by the Committee in accordance with their powers to an organisation which is exempt from income tax under Section 23 of the Income Tax Assessment

Act. and to re-number old Sections V - XV accordingly ie., VI - XVI.

### Conferences

1. 1994 Conference: The proposed 1994 conference in New Zealand is not possible due to complications at each potential conference site. We are now looking for a 1996 conference in New Zealand. Brian Colless said that Australians would of course be invited to attend

the NZASR conference in New Zealand next year.

Robert Lacey of the Aquinas Campus of the ACU presented a proposal for the ACU (Victoria) to host the 1994 A.A.S.R. conference at Ballarat, 2-3 July. There is accommodation for 70-80 on campus. An alternative venue for the 1994 conference is Adelaide, especially if coinciding with ANZATS. The meeting recommended exploration and decision on a suitable venue and date be passed to the Executive.

Norman Habel asked members to advance the names of younger scholars and other scholars to him for possible Charles Strong lecturers for 1994.

2. 1993 Conference: Val Noone asked why more information about the concurrent conferences this year was not available. Alan Black explained the oral agreement for joint registration, which the other conferences did not honour.

### International relations

1. IAHR: we are paying a considerable sum in fees each year (\$US1 per member) and receive little in return. Paul Rule proposed that the incoming Executive draft a proposal for the 1994 AGM outlining case for and against affiliation.

2. New Zealand: the decision for closer affiliation with AASR was rejected

by the NZASR in 1992, but cordial discussions are continuing. Jane Simpson said that she would work in the next year to widen the NZASR's membership base, so that it was more than a club of Religious Studies Departments in universities. Discussion of forming an Australasian Association would be more meaningful once New Zealanders, particularly students, had the experience of attending a combined AASR/NZASR conference.

3. Canada: Jamie Scott spoke on the Canadian Society for the Study of Religions and brought greetings from its President, Jacques Goulet. There are a number of suggestions for mutual exchange of publications and bulletins. He discussed the issue of academic freedom in theological colleges. He particularly enjoyed attending this conference.

4. United States: a number of members belong to the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. It was recommended that the Executive contact this and other US organisations for reciprocal benefits.

### Other Business

The meeting noted with regret the recent death of Ray Harrison. Morny Joy moved that we note his selfless work as Secretary of the AASR in 1985 and 1986.

## Secretary's Report to AGM

'Tricia paid tribute to Peter Bentley, her secretarial assistant, for his continuing support and great efficiency. There are now 269 financial members, not including the four who joined during the 1993 conference. There are 75 unpaid members. The policy now is that those who

have not paid their subs continue to receive the journal for a year with a warning, and then their names are removed from the list of members.

A large number of students has joined, and there is a large number of new institutional members.

## Women's Caucus Report

About 20 women met for the Annual Women's Caucus meeting on July 2, 1993. Discussion included the formation and history of the Caucus, problems of funding for students, isolation of women students, relations between students and supervisors, and activities - past and present - in various cities.

In Sydney, for example, a series of occasional seminars have been held in the last nine months. These have been attended regularly by 20-25 people and over 50 came to the last seminar presented by Rosemary Crumlin on traditional Aboriginal Women's painting. Carol Walker Bynum, the acclaimed medievalist, will present the August seminar. The seminars provide a lively forum for women scholars and for the exploration of gender questions in the area of religion.

The caucus is also liaising with another group of women scholars - 'Women

Scholars in Religion and Theology' - which was established at the International Congress in Melbourne in 1992. Some caucus members also belong to this group. Preliminary discussions are underway about the possibility of a jointly run conference on 'Gender and Religion'.

Penny Magee and Morny Joy are currently editing a collection of essays by women scholars with the title *Claiming our Rites: Australian Feminist Essays in Religion* to be published by AASR in 1994.

The Women's Caucus will continue to function as a network of women studying and teaching religion. Penny Magee will continue to be the contact person for potential new members.

*Erin White*

