

MINUTES OF THE CANADIAN ORAL  
HISTORY ASSOCIATION BUSINESS  
MEETING HELD IN TORONTO, ONTARIO  
OCTOBER 14, 1978

- A. Approval of the Minutes of Last Year's Annual Meeting in Edmonton, Alberta, September 24, 1977:

The President, Mrs. Jane McCracken, asked for the adoption of the minutes of last year's annual meeting held in Edmonton at the fourth annual C.O.H.A. conference. This was so moved by Mr. Don Surtees, seconded by Dr. James Morrison and passed unanimously.

- B. Business Arising From the Minutes of Last Year's Annual Meeting:

The President drew the attention of the delegates to Section B of the minutes entitled "Resolutions by the Executive". She then pointed to the resolution brought forward by the Treasurer, Dr. Neil Rosenberg, which recommended that the C.O.H.A. meet in conjunction with the Learned Societies in Saskatoon in June of 1979. The President noted that such a resolution would have meant that the Association was committed to meet again six months from the time of the present conference. She then explained that although the resolution had been passed unanimously at last year's business meeting the Executive of the Association had met in Ottawa in January, 1978 and decided that the proposed joint meeting was both impractical and inconvenient and that a meeting with the Learned Societies should be postponed until the spring of 1980. This was felt to be the only practical solution since the Learned Societies require a tentative conference program six months prior to their meeting and had the plans remained as adopted in Edmonton last year, a conference program for the June, 1979 meeting would have had to have been drawn up in addition to that for the present Conference. The President then confirmed that the C.O.H.A. would be meeting with the Learned Societies in the spring of 1980, most likely at the University of Montreal. Mrs. McCracken then referred to a suggestion made last year in conjunction with the resolution to meet with the Learned Societies in June 1979 which, as an alternate choice, called for the C.O.H.A. to meet with the Association for the Study of Canadian Radio and Television during the spring of the present year. The President and the rest of the Executive felt, however, that this alternative was no better than the proposal to meet with the Learned Societies in 1979 since it would have given the C.O.H.A. only six months to plan this year's Conference after the conclusion of last year's meeting in Edmonton. The President then informed the delegates that the Association for the Study of Canadian Radio and Television had since made a decision to meet in Montreal on the same dates as the present C.O.H.A. Conference but that this change in plans had been made too late to effect a joint gathering.

- C. Reports From The Executive:

In her report, the President first made note of her inability to attend the annual Executive Meeting held this past January in Ottawa and thanked Dr. Neil Rosenberg, the Vice-President, for chairing the session and contributing to its

success. Mrs. McCracken then informed the delegates that the Executive, through powers invested in it, had, during the present year, established a sub-committee or, in this case, a committee of one in the person of Mrs. Daphne Bolestridge to act on behalf of the Association in the areas of public relations and membership solicitation. The President reported that Mrs. Bolestridge had embraced the dual role wholeheartedly and was reporting successes from her efforts. In connection with C.O.H.A. publications, the President advised that these have been consolidated from three Bulletins and one Journal per year to two Journals per year. She continued by explaining that the Editor of these publications for the past two years has been M. Leo LaClare but that he had moved from the Sound Archives and the Public Archives and subsequently had relinquished that position. The President reported, however, that Mr. Richard Lohead of the Sound Archives had volunteered to take over the role as Editor of the Journal and that Denis Gagnon, the present Treasurer of the Association, who was not reoffering for executive position, would act as Assistant Editor to Mr. Lohead. Mrs. McCracken informed the meeting that these positions were not elective but rather appointed at the discretion of the Executive. The President then commented on the increasing difficulty of securing assistance from the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Council, the support of which had been dwindling since the inaugural meeting of the C.O.H.A. in 1974 in Vancouver. She explained that the Council had shown reluctance to support last year's conference in Edmonton but had done so with the proviso that further assistance for future meetings would depend on the ability of the C.O.H.A. to defend its philosophy within the guidelines laid down for support by that body. The President then reported that she had written a letter to the Council which attempted to justify the Association's position relative to support from that organization and that this letter had achieved success in light of the Council's decision to permit and entertain an application for assistance from the C.O.H.A. for the present Conference. Mrs. McCracken informed the delegates that such an application had been mailed to the Council but that an official notice regarding that body's decision had been and would be delayed because of the current mail strike. The President then concluded her report with an overview of oral history activity in Canada and its general state of health, a condition which she felt to be good with the exception of Alberta and Manitoba where such activity has not kept pace with that of the other provinces.

The President then called upon the Treasurer, Denis Gagnon, to give his report and explained that M. Gagnon would also report on the state of the Association's membership, normally included within the Vice-President's report but because of the latter's forced absence, to be included in the Treasurer's report. M. Gagnon began with a brief report on the membership wherein he informed the delegates that, as of October 6 of the current year, the C.O.H.A. had 248 names on its list of which 134 were individual memberships, 65 were institutional, 36 subscriptional, 3 life memberships and 10 complimentary memberships. The Treasurer added that from the inception of the C.O.H.A. in 1974 until October 6, 1978, 412 individuals or institutions had joined, left or renewed their membership with the Association and that the current membership figures should be viewed as a positive sign for the future of the C.O.H.A. With respect to the financial condition of the Association, M. Gagnon reported that as of January, 1978, the C.O.H.A. had a balance of \$1,065.00, a figure resulting from the difference between the overall receipts, including the previous year's balance, for a total of \$6,122.00 and the overall expenditures for 1977 totalling \$5,057.00. The Treasurer continued by stating that from January 1 to October 5, 1978, the C.O.H.A. had received \$1,973.66 in the form of membership dues and royalties on the sale of conference tapes from previous gatherings, a figure which did not include last year's balance. He informed the delegates that expenditures for the same period totalled \$1,464.43 and that the current C.O.H.A. running total stood at \$1,570.11. The Treasurer concluded by stating that if any members

wished a more detailed examination of the Association's finances, they were welcome to study the C.O.H.A.'s financial accounts. After his report, the Treasurer responded to a question from the floor concerning the Association's financial state after the present Conference by saying that it was too soon to accurately predict this result but expressed the opinion that the organization would not be confronted by a serious situation of that nature.

The President then called upon Gary Hughes, English Language Secretary, for his report. Mr. Hughes first outlined the duties of the English Language Secretary with specific reference to the preceding year which included recording the minutes for the 1977 Conference in Edmonton, a written report on that Conference and the minutes of the Executive meeting held in Ottawa in January. Mr. Hughes stated that he had also contributed such news items to the Journal as were available from the Atlantic region and that he was responsible for completing the application to the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Council requesting support for the present Conference which, although tardy, had nevertheless been accepted by the Council. In addition to these regular duties, the English Language Secretary reported that he had conducted a number of oral history workshops in his native province of New Brunswick with both professional and amateur organizations or groups and that, whenever possible, these bodies were informed of the aims and goals of the C.O.H.A. together with the advantages inherent in joining the organization. This concluded the report of the English Language Secretary whereupon the President called on the French Language Secretary, Jean-Paul Moreau for his report. M. Moreau reiterated those regular duties concerning the 1977 Conference and the Executive meeting which applied to his position and were reported in his native language. He continued by stating that like the English Language Secretary, he had sought material for the Journal from the Province of Quebec and that several workshops were held in that province which were designed to aid those in attendance to increase their knowledge of oral history and to promote the C.O.H.A. M. Moreau also reported on the progress of the C.O.H.A. library, a library consisting of essential books and papers relating to oral history which was started in 1976 at the Sound Archives, PAC, Ottawa and which was entrusted to his charge. He stated that titles from a number of the library's holdings had been mentioned in Volume 3, Number 2 of the Bulletin (Summer, 1977) and that other publications relating to the same source were noted in the last issue of the Journal. The French Language Secretary concluded his report by informing the delegates that those publications mentioned in both the Bulletin and the Journal, in addition to the other titles held by the library, were available on request from the membership.

#### D. New Business:

The President informed the delegates that during the annual business meeting in Edmonton in 1977, the report of the retiring English Language Secretary, Mr. Don Surtees, recommended that the C.O.H.A. meet every two years instead of on an annual basis such that the administrative strain and costs could be reduced. The President continued by stating that this idea had been considered by the Executive and that, in any case, the fact that the C.O.H.A. would be meeting with the Learned Societies in the spring of 1980 made it necessary to amend that section of the constitution which called for an annual meeting and election of officers. The President then opened the matter for discussion.

Mr. Surtees, who had been unable to attend the 1977 Conference, then made a motion from the floor calling for a business meeting and an election of officers every two years. He explained that such a motion would not preclude the Executive's stated decision to meet in 1980 with the Learned Societies but that generally such a policy should be adopted. The motion was seconded by Joan Gibson whereupon the President called for discussion. One point raised concerned the long distances and attendant

expense incurred by some of those who travel to C.O.H.A. conferences and that if such meetings were held once every two years it would reduce the geographical coverage thus lowering the frequency with which these delegates could attend, since the frequency of meetings near or relatively near their home areas would also be reduced. This matter was answered by the Treasurer, Denis Gagnon, who said that the C.O.H.A. was giving serious consideration to the idea of holding several regional workshops across the country in 1979 in lieu of an annual conference. Another point raised involved the question of whether the law required that non profit charitable organizations who wished to become incorporated, hold an annual general meeting. The Executive agreed that this question required investigation since the C.O.H.A. was not incorporated and may wish that status in the future. The discussion following this question resulted in the suggestion that rather than change the constitution before the matter is investigated, the meeting with the Learned Societies in 1980 should be considered a one time occurrence such that if it is discovered that an incorporated body does require an annual meeting, the C.O.H.A. could revert to that format during its next conference. The original proposer of the motion, Mr. Surtees, then suggested that this motion be withdrawn and substituted with the wording that the C.O.H.A. meet with the Learned Societies in the spring of 1980. This was done and the motion seconded by the seconder of the previous motion, Joan Gibson. The President then added the comment that the meeting with the Learned Societies was indeed an experiment and that future C.O.H.A. conferences may or may not be held in conjunction with them. The President then called for question on the motion and, there being none, it was passed unanimously.

Mr. Surtees then rose again and moved that the C.O.H.A. adopt a code of ethics, a set of guidelines relating to the informant and interviewer for recommended use by the membership. The motion was seconded by Sandra Guillaume and, on the question, the President commented that the Oral History Association in the United States had adopted such a set of guidelines in 1978 and it was her opinion that the adoption of a similar set of guidelines by the C.O.H.A. would be a logical step by the organization. In response to this recommendation, a comment from the floor was made regarding the legal difficulties surrounding the adoption of same, such as losing control of tape recordings, together with the reservation that the draughting of a set of guidelines might take a considerable amount of time. Another delegate answered these reservations by stating that the C.O.H.A. might draught a set of general guidelines with an appendix making note of those areas where legal problems might arise. One final point on the matter concerned whether C.O.H.A. had made representation to the Copyright Review Legislation Hearings in Ottawa. The Treasurer, Denis Gagnon, replied that the Association had not but that Sound Archives, PAC had done so. There being no further question, the motion was then carried unanimously.

The President then asked for the introduction of further items of new business. Several comments were then made concerning membership in the C.O.H.A. and which classes of the membership have voting privileges together with suggestions for more detailed information on the membership list such as business and home telephone numbers, asteriks beside those members who have voting privileges and the recommendation of selling this list on a cost recovery basis. The President, Jane McCracken replied that individual, institutional and life members have voting rights but that subscription and complimentary members do not. The Treasurer, Denis Gagnon, stated that he would investigate the possibilities of adding more information to the membership list as well as selling same when he prepares the new list for the coming year. There being no other items of new business, the President moved on to the next item on the agenda, the report of the Nominating Committee.

E. Report of the Nominating Committee

The President called for the retirement of the present Executive and asked Ms. Barbara Diggins to present the report of the Nominating Committee. Ms. Diggins then noted that the retiring officers of the present Executive were: Jane McCracken, President; Dr. Neil Rosenberg, Vice-President; M. Denis Gagnon, Treasurer and M. Jean-Paul Moreau, French Language Secretary. She then explained that she had been selected as part of the Nominating Committee together with Dr. Robert Cosbey, University of Regina and Claudia Cunnington of the same institution. She reported that the Committee had nominated the following for the new Executive:

President: James Morrison  
Vice-President: Jean-Paul Moreau  
English Language Secretary: Gary Hughes  
French Language Secretary: Bruno Jean

There being no question from the floor, these officers were declared elected. Ms. Diggins then explained that no nominations were received for the office of Treasurer and that consequently the office had to be filled by nominations from the floor. Ms. Christine Arderm then proposed that Mr. Chris Gebhard be nominated for the position of Treasurer. This motion was seconded by Sandra Guillaume and, there being no further nominations, Mr. Gebhard accepted. Mr. Don Surtees then moved that the nominations be closed. The motion was seconded by Sandra Guillaume where-upon Ms. Diggins presented the new Executive to the delegates.

F. Other Business:

The new President, Dr. James Morrison, then thanked Jane McCracken, the immediate past President for her efforts and leadership during the year 1977-78. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Gary Hughes  
English Language Secretary