

MINUTES
Business Meeting
Academy of Accounting Historians, NY, NY
Sunday, August 2, 2009, 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Hilton NY, Concourse D, Concourse Level

The meeting convened at 7:00 PM.

Present: Jennifer Reynolds-Moehrle (treasurer, chair), Laurie Barfitt, Rachel Baskerville, Kees Camfferman, Salvador Carmona, Kevin Carduff, Robert Colson, Rich Criscione, Kevin Feeney, Dick Fleischman, Dale Flesher, Nohora Garcia, Joan Hollister, Joel Jameson, Dan Jensen, Eiichiro Kudo, Royce Kurtz (guest), Yvette Lazdowski, Yoshinao Matsumoto, Alan Mayer, Jim McKinney, Barbara Merino, Stephanie Moussalli, Sven-Arne Nilsson, Hiroshi Okano, Gary Previts, Angelica Santos, Sally Schultz, Barbara Scofield, Don Tidrick, Tom Tyson, Greg Waymire.

1. Approval of minutes of meeting of August 3, 2008

Mayer moved, Tyson seconded, unanimously approved.

2. Thomas J. Burns Accounting Biographical Research Award Presented by Flesher.

Dr. E. Richard Criscione won the 2009 Academy of Accounting Historians Thomas J. Burns Accounting Biographical Research Award, presented by Dale Flesher. Criscione, of Morehead State University, in Kentucky, was honored for his recent book on Abraham Briloff, *Abraham J. (Abe) Briloff: A Biography*, part of the *Studies in the Development of Accounting Thought* series.

The Academy of Accounting Historians annually honors as recipient of the award an individual who has conducted outstanding biographical research in the discipline of accountancy. The award includes a plaque and a financial honorarium. Dr. Thomas J. Burns, for whom the award is named, was a long-time professor at Ohio State University and a past president of the Academy of Accounting Historians.

The selection committee consisted of Dale Flesher (chairman), Richard Vangermeersch, and Sally Schultz. The committee considered five strong nominations and had a difficult decision. Criscione's book was chosen unanimously. Past award winners include: Stephen Zeff (2008), Don Tidrick (2007), Richard Vangermeersch (2006), and Dale Flesher (2005).

3. President's report Submitted by Cheryl McWatters, president, in absentia, read by Reynolds-Moehrle, presiding.

"I am submitting this report with regrets that I am not with you this evening to present it personally, to entertain your questions and to enjoy the opportunity to meet with colleagues and friends. Unfortunately, in January 2007, I agreed to organise a session at the World Economic History Congress currently underway in Utrecht, The Netherlands. At that time, I had no knowledge that I would be Academy president in 2009 or that the dates of the AAA would coincide with those of the WEHC, a congress that takes place only every four years. On a positive note, my attendance at the WEHC is an opportunity to discuss accounting history with colleagues in other disciplines, an increasingly important facet of our research endeavour.

"First, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Stephanie Moussalli, our secretary, and Tiffany Welch, our administrative co-ordinator, for their time and effort to arrange this meeting and our reception. As well, I would like to express my thanks to Jennifer Reynolds-Moehrle for chairing the meeting in my absence.

"This month marks completion of 7 months as president and it is hard to believe that I am into my final months in this role. It has been an active time in terms of the Academy, but many initiatives still need to be move forward and continue in order that the Academy remain strong and viable in the years ahead. I

would like to summarise briefly some activities – most of which you would have seen noted already via e-mail, on our website or in our newsletter.

“This year, we have recognised a number of our colleagues for their research and work in accounting history. Professor Richard K. Fleischman was awarded a Life Membership in the Academy at the beginning of 2009. In March, I had the opportunity to present the 2009 Hourglass Award to Professor Mahmoud Ezzamel at our annual research conference. At this time, we also presented our 2008 Vangermeersch Award to Nicolas Praquin. I am hopeful that this year we will see a number of candidates for the Vangermeersch Award as well as the Schoenfeld Scholarship. These awards encourage young scholars and are critical means to demonstrate the importance and value of accounting history.

“As previously mentioned, our annual research conference was a success on many fronts. First, held in Paris, France in collaboration with colleagues from the Université de Paris and the Université d’Evry, it was our initial research conference outside North America. We were fortunate to join with the 14th Journées d’Histoire de la Comptabilité et du Management to present this conference and I thank Professors Henri Zimnovitch and Alain Michel for their patience and hard work to bring this to fruition. Second, we had over 70 individuals from around the globe in attendance and third, the conference was a financial success. With this positive bottom line, the conference co-ordinators are able to proceed with the planned publication of selected conference papers.

“Administrative efficiency, communications and member services have occupied significant time of many of us on the executive team. While this behind-the-scenes work might not be all that interesting to the average member, it is important to realise that the Academy does not function on auto-pilot. Since last year, I have come to appreciate increasingly this work and side of the Academy. Members of the ‘administrative team’ have established regular teleconferences during which we have been able to work through a number of administrative areas enabling us to facilitate our service to members, to eliminate some inefficiencies and to examine the financial implications of our activities in something much nearer to ‘real time’. While these efforts often go unnoticed, what should be noticed is our increasing ability to be current and to serve member needs. I will come back to this issue in my closing comments.

“One important part of service to members is *The Accounting Historians Notebook*. It is wonderful to see it back on track in terms of publication and to witness our shift to a digital format. This change allows us to get *The Notebook* to members quickly and efficiently. The format is more environmentally friendly and meets preferences for electronic to hard copy. I would like to acknowledge the work and dedication of Joann Noe-Cross who has left the editorship after many years of service. I am happy to announce that vice-president (communications) Jim McKinney has accepted to continue as co-editor of *The Notebook* and will be joined by Dr. David Oldroyd, Newcastle University Business School, as co-editor. Welcome David!

“Our membership numbers are one area where I plan to commit my efforts during the final months of my presidency. Our numbers are dwindling in some areas as members retire. Fortunately, we have introduced this year a ‘retired members’ category to provide a more economical way for retirees to remain active members. However, we need to do much more to encourage membership of doctoral students and young scholars. This year we have seen a small increase in this membership category. One challenge that I would put out to you would be to introduce one such member with your own membership. I joined the Academy as a doctoral student – and it is a bargain! – and now can look back on many years during which I have been able to network and receive the support of like-minded colleagues for my own research and teaching. If we each find one person (or several), and encourage their interest in the Academy, we will bring fresh thinking and ideas into our midst. As well, our individual membership is becoming increasingly balanced between U.S. and international members. This sign is a positive one as it demonstrates that the Academy has an important role to play in the international research community and to bring scholars from around the globe together to foster interest and scholarship in our discipline.

“In this vein, it is a great pleasure to announce that I have signed on behalf of the Academy, a

memorandum of understanding with the Società Italiana di Storia della Ragioneria (Italian Society of Accounting History) “to develop academic exchange and cooperation in teaching and research in the furtherance of the advancement and dissemination of learning”. I would like to express my thanks to the SISR president, Professor Maria Bergamin, and also to Professor Roberto Di Pietra for their determination to achieve this agreement. To paraphrase Professor Di Pietra’s comments on the signing, we need ‘to be proud of our own roots and traditions but, at the same time and at with the same strength, we need to be open to other communities, new ideas, exchanges, to reciprocal influences and opportunities’. I look forward to working with the SISR to foster research collaborations, meetings and scholarship.

“Finally, in closing, I would like to ask all of you to renew your commitment to the Academy in whatever big or small way that you can. We have many dedicated volunteers who carry significant loads on our behalf and enable us to do much with limited administrative staff. In the next few months, the executive will be continuing its discussions on ways to improve our member services, including changes to our website and communications. I would encourage you to provide us with your input into how we best can support your needs as researchers and scholars. As well, our president-elect Gregory Waymire will be moving forward with discussions on strategic renewal, work which began under past-president Stephen Walker. I look forward to working with Greg as we determine options to enhance the work of the Academy and to provide for our longer-term viability.

“In closing, many thanks to those of you who have taken the time to be here this evening and to provide your ideas and input. As president and on behalf of the executive team, I appreciate and rely on your support and encouragement. Your suggestions and ideas are always welcome. Do not hesitate to contact me in order that we can take all of your views and comments into due consideration.”

“Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl S. McWatters,
2009 President”

4. Memorandum of Understanding with the Italian Society – Roberto Di Pietra, University of Siena

The SISR, the Italian Society, provided an informational handout which has been emailed to members and will appear in a future issue of the *Accounting Historians Notebook*.

5. Budget Update / Treasurer’s report Jennifer Reynolds-Moehrle, treasurer. Watkins, Ward, and Stafford have just finished the AAH audit and informational tax return. There were no findings.

The AAH received two generous anonymous donations in 2008 (see *Accounting Historians Notebook* announcement), bringing our Endowment Fund to \$103,000.

\$75,000 of Academy certificates of deposit funds with the Bank of America were removed to avoid exceeding the FDIC limit and deposited with National City Bank (now part of PNC). The Academy needs a volunteer additional officer or trustee to be a co-signer on its CDs. Please let the treasurer know of any suggestions on the best financial management; currently the Academy funds are mostly in short-term CDs. However the Schoenfeld funds are in longer-term CDs.

Dues revenues have decreased about 5% per year over the last four years due to a drop in institutional membership. About 95% of the Academy’s revenues are from dues, and 5% from interest income on the CDs. 50% of costs are the publications (*AHJ* and *AHM*). 45% is administrative costs, including two paid personnel and supplies. About 10% is in awards and conference subventions.

The 2010 budget will be developed in the light of past trends and interest rate trends. This budget will be circulated in the near future to officers and trustees for feedback. The annual

budget is roughly \$60,000, although the treasurer does not have the exact figures with her. The audited financial statements are available to members upon request. It costs the AAH about \$2,200/year for the audit and tax return.

6. Report of editor of *AHJ* Dick Fleishman, co-editor.

The winners of the manuscript awards for best papers in 2008 were announced in the June, 2009 issue of the *Accounting Historians Journal*.

There are currently 26 active manuscripts in process at the *AHJ*, more than there have been in several years. Half of these are being handled by co-editor Christopher Napier. Five articles have been accepted for the next issue. Five others are close to acceptance in the near future, and five have been rejected.

There need to be some shorter submissions and more from U.S. authors. The lack of submissions from American authors may reflect the relative emphasis placed on accounting history in the U.S. vs. other countries.

Articles on new parts of the world such as Malaysia, Nepal, and Brazil, have been received. This reverses an *AHJ* trend of the last several years. Fleischman's own recent article on co-authorship patterns suggests that *AHJ* articles tend to be provincial in that authors seldom reach out to co-authors from other countries.

Napier has attended two recent international conferences. He reports that top academics with history papers aim for *AOS*, *AAAJ*, and *Critical Perspectives*, all of which are more prestigious than any purely historical journal. Participants at those conferences said they perceive *Accounting History* and *ABFH* to be stronger than the *AHJ*, that they appear in more online databases than does the *AHJ*. Fleischman strongly disagrees with this assessment of the *AHJ*, arguing that it has better articles.

Floor discussion ensued. Tyson suggested the *AHJ* consider having special issues and guest editors. It was suggested that the *AHJ* might publish more frequently as does the *AH*. Some discussion of what "better articles" means took place. Mayer pointed out that since US schools do not accept the *AHJ* as a quality journal, scholars do not. Moussalli pointed out that the *AHJ* is indexed by both Ebsco and ProQuest, so it does in fact appear in online databases.

7. 2010 Academy Research meeting, Ohio State Dan Jensen

The 2010 Academy Research Conference will take place at Ohio State University (September 30, 2010 to October 2, 2010) in Columbus, Ohio, and is co-sponsored by The Accounting Hall of Fame. This is the third Academy research meeting to take place in this format. The theme of the conference is "Accounting in Economic Recovery and Regulation." Issue-oriented plenary panel discussions including prominent representatives of both academe and the accounting profession are planned as are concurrent sessions for research papers. Saturday afternoon will be available for Academy meetings.

Jensen will oversee the facilities arrangements for the meeting and also the review of manuscripts. Waymire volunteered to help Jensen form the editorial review committee for the conference. Speakers are currently being invited. The registration fee will be \$165 and Jensen distributed a call for papers.

8. Administrative Coordinator's report

A. Website Jim McKinney.

There are issues with the Academy's current website host at Rutgers. Some of the issues have been resolved and McKinney and Tiffany Welsh now have the ability to update the site directly to

some extent. This will mitigate the past problem with the website sometimes being very out-of-date.

Suggestions for improvements to the site are solicited. A team composed of McKinney, Welsh, and a user will work on improving the site and evaluating alternatives. Several domain names have been registered, including aahhq.org and tahj.org.

Previts mentioned that we are in discussion with various commercial website host providers, who can hopefully provide interactive functionality for dues. Reynolds-Moehrle commented that we attempt to make the Rutgers site look interactive for dues purposes but a lot of the work behind the scenes takes place by postal mail. Previts noted that the site migrated once before, from Case Western to Rutgers.

B. Membership Tiffany Welsh, in absentia

As of July 2009, there were 280 individual and 282 institutional members of the Academy. 155 of the individuals and 227 of the institutions were U.S. A spreadsheet with membership details will be distributed.

9. Reports of Committee Chairs / Awards information

A. *Accounting Historians Notebook* Jim McKinney, co-editor

McKinney thanked JoAnn Noe Cross for her year of service as editor of the *AHN*. McKinney initially agreed to co-edit the *Notebook* with Cross, but she decided her other obligations made it best to leave the position sooner than expected. David Oldroyd has now agreed to co-edit the *AHN*.

Major goals will be that it appear in a timely way, that it incorporate articles that are perhaps not suited for journals but are useful in some way to the organization. Advertisements of history conferences will continue. Moussalli mentioned that the many photographs in the *AHN* have been indexed under "Portraits" at the Digital Accounting Collection site (http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/general_library/dac/files/ahn.html).

Distribution in the future will be by pdf files, on the Academy website, and on the University of Mississippi's Digital Accounting Collection site. Hard copies will be distributed to libraries and to individuals who request them.

The cost of printing and distributing the *AHN* was very favorable at the University of Wisconsin-OshKosh. Mayer asked if the *AHN* should still be printed at all. It was suggested that institutions be offered an opt-out for the hard copies. McKinney thought it should be printed for libraries. The total cost is about \$500-\$600 per issue.

B. Vangermeersch Manuscript Award Committee Chairman Lee Parker

Parker reports that the applications period has now closed and applications are currently being judged by the panel.

C. Doctoral Education Committee Chairman Barbara Merino

Suggestions are solicited for how to increase doctoral student participation. Emails may be sent to Merino. Letters to doctoral coordinators do not work. Letters to Academy members may be sent requesting us to sponsor students or junior faculty as new members. Would members object to this? Previts suggested sending out the letter in the fall in conjunction with the 2010 conference. Merino is also looking at funding to bring students to the Ohio Research conference.

D. Strategic Review Committee Chairman Greg Waymire

The strategy effort led by Steve Walker provides excellent historical information and Waymire has

added to the committee more people to consider what steps to take now.

Doctoral student recruitment could possibly be encouraged by providing a CPE at the AAA annual meetings or at the Columbus, Ohio conference. The theme should be that scholars who are not historians should often be informed by history.

Suggestions from the membership are solicited.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie D. Moussalli, Secretary