

Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting, May 29 2004  
May 29 '004 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING, SOCIETY OF EARLY AMERICANISTS  
at the A.L.A. conference, Hyatt Regency San Francisco

Attending: David Carlson, Pat Cesarini, Michael Clark, Ray Craig, Elizabeth Dillon, Ed Griffin, Lisa Logan, Etta Madden, Dennis Moore (SEA v.p.), Carla Mulford, Scotti Parrish, Zabelle Stodola (SEA president), and Ned Watts

Vice president Moore called the meeting to order shortly after 8:00 a.m. and recognized Michael Clark, the SEA's webmaster; Ray Craig, moderator of our EarAm-L listserv; and founding president Carla Mulford. President Stodola's brief welcome included a reminder about the sequence of deadlines for proposing sessions and individual papers for our fourth biennial conference, March 31-April 2, 2005, in Old Town Alexandria: panel proposals are due by June 15; conference director Ralph Bauer and his program committee will assemble a list of sessions to distribute by July 15; proposals for individual papers within those sessions will be due by September 15; complete information is due from the panel chairs by October 15. Pres. Stodola expressed the organization's appreciation for Prof. Bauer's hard work. She also announced that soon she will distribute information about the biennial election of an Executive Coordinator, who will serve two years in that office and then rotate into successive two-year terms as V. P. and President.

Executive Coordinator, Thomas Krise, could not attend this year's ALA conference, so V.P. Moore read his report (N.B.: A copy of that report will go to the webmaster for posting at the SEA's website, along with the full texts of these minutes and the Vice President's report). As of May 20, the SEA has 163 paid members, and as of May 23, our account stands at \$15,477.35. Prof. Krise also described the possibility of obtaining "some corporate sponsorship and perhaps an endowment for SEA. Any move in this direction will require a change to our tax status, so I'm hoping to canvas for a volunteer who might take on the challenge of looking into the rules for making such changes. Also, I would like to be able to establish an online method of paying dues. This, too, will take some research."

ASECS: V.P. Moore's report on his own activities during the 2003-'004 year included details on his involvement in the SEA's liaison with the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies: working closely with Lisa Logan, chair of our Committee of Correspondence (i.e., SEA-ASECS liaison committee, whose other members are Dan Williams and Christine Huber) and with Laura Stevens, chair of our Essay Prize Committee (judges she lined up for 2003-2004 are Steven Bullock, Laura Kennelly, and Ed Larkin). Since the SEA's 2003 Business Meeting, ASECS has had two conferences, and we have had considerable visibility as the organization's Americanist affiliate. Last August, ASECS met in Los Angeles jointly with ISECS, its international counterpart; Prof. Krise organized and chaired the SEA Session, "Cross-Cultural Connections," and the SEA hosted a reception. For ASECS's more recent conference, in Boston in March, Prof. Logan organized and chaired the SEA Session, "Sarah Kemble Knight's Boston, ca. 1704"; we hosted a reception; and ASECS president Joan Landes presented the fifth annual SEA Essay Prize to Brycchan Carey for "'Accounts of Savage Nations': The Spectator and the Americas." V.P. Moore reminded those present that since its inception the Essay Prize has welcomed any paper on an Americanist topic, broadly conceived, from the ASECS annual conference or that of any of the ASECS affiliate societies. V.P. Moore also described having contacted ASECS's executive director, on behalf of SEA's officers, to ask about the possibility of re-scheduling ASECS's 2005 conference--which will be in Las Vegas on the same weekend as our own fourth biennial conference, in Alexandria. Due to the lead time involved in arranging conferences on this scale, re-scheduling proved impossible. We did learn the dates for ASECS's 2007 conference (i.e., March 20-24, in Atlanta), so that we can avoid any similar conflict with the timing of our own 2007 conference.

ALA: V.P. Moore reported on having assembled an ad hoc committee to screen the thirty-something proposals for papers in the current ALA conference: Mike Clark, Dennis Moore as chair, Stephen Shapiro, Bill Warner, and Karen Weyler. Based on the especially high number of proposals, he got permission from the conference organizer to present four SEA sessions rather than our customary three: "Early American Literacies" (Scotti Parrish, chair), "Xenophobia and Cultural Exchange in Early American Literature" (David Carlson, chair), "Theatrics" (Dennis Moore, chair), and "Early American Literature and 'The Other'" (Zabelle Stodola, chair). Rather than scheduling a reception or cash bar, we announced an informal "Meet Up" in the hotel's main lobby bar, following the second of the two SEA sessions on Friday afternoon.

Regarding the SEA's 2005 conference, V.P. Moore acknowledged Dan Williams' having pointed out the upcoming anniversary of Revolution and the Word and reported that Cathy Davidson has agreed to participate in a proposed Colloquy with the Author; he thanked Pres. Stodola for having suggested that it be on the schedule in a plenary slot. Regarding plans for our 2007 conference, V.P. Moore reported that three prospective hosts submitted detailed proposals following the Providence conference: Steve Arch; Mark Kamrath, with St. Augustine as proposed site; and Fredrika Teute, Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture. After extensive deliberations, the officers agreed in principle that the 2007 conference will be at Williamsburg, in conjunction with Jamestown's 400th anniversary. Profs. Arch and Kamrath have each generously confirmed that they will participate in the organizing committee, which Fredrika Teute and V.P. Moore will co-chair.

The group briefly discussed V. P. Moore's plan for proposing an "Early American Matters" caucus within the American Studies Association; he will submit the proposal as an ASA member, rather than as an SEA officer. Elizabeth Dillon agreed that early-American papers and panels are rare at the ASA and described a vicious circle: when the ASA conference program includes few if any such topics, early Americanists can feel less motivated to propose any for subsequent ASAs.

New Business:

- Prof. Parrish announced that ASLE, the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment, had included an early-American session at its biennial conference in 2003 ("Reading the Roots: American Nature Writing Before Walden") and will hold its June 21-26, 2005 conference at the University of Oregon.
- Prof. Griffin described a new initiative involving Evans; following the ALA conference he kindly furnished a brief description for these minutes, like so:  
"The Evans" is becoming "The Digital Evans." Many scholars of early America know and regularly use Early American Imprints, Series I, Evans (1639-1800), the microform series, based upon the American Bibliography of Charles Evans (and its supplement produced by Roger Bristol), that makes available all the extant imprints produced in North America before 1800. Now Readex (a division of Newsbank) is producing a digital version supplying searchable, OCR-generated and ASCII text of all 36,000 items and 2.3 million images in the microform editions. But that's not all. In a very recent development, the University of Michigan libraries, the American Antiquarian Society, and Readex have jointly launched an additional project, called the Evans-Text Creation Partnership (Evans-TCP), to enhance the new Digital Evans by creating accurately keyed, SGML/XML-encoded text editions providing searchable text with links to corresponding page images in Evans. In the first phase of this effort, 6,000 imprints from Evans will be created in this sophisticated format. Work is already under way, and the project aims for a completion date of this phase in 2007. Evans-TCP has assembled an advisory team of scholars from various disciplines to help AAS select the first 6,000 titles.  
--Edward M. Griffin / Distinguished Graduate Professor of English, U. of Minnesota

- Prof. Clark commended Susan Imbarrato of Minnesota State University Moorhead for having agreed to serve as Publications Page Coordinator for the SEA's website, at

<http://www.mnstate.edu/seabooks/books.html>. Prof. Craig noted that Prof. Imbarrato will soon post a list of recent publications.

Given that the third of this year's four SEA Sessions was to begin at 9:30, the group agreed to adjourn shortly after 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dennis Moore  
Vice President, '003-'005