

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of WISPS held on 15th
September 2005, at 5p.m., at the Institute of Germanic and Romance
Studies, University of London.**

Present: Par Kumaraswami, Lesley Twomey, Anne Davies, Claire Williams, Kirsty Hooper, Jill Ingham, Margaret Clarke, Anja Louis, María José Blanco, Margaret Andrews, Núria Triana-Toribio, Eavan O'Brien, Ana Cruz, Carrie Hamilton, Kathy Bacon, Hilary Owen.

Apologies: from Kathy Bacon, Lesley Twomey, Ann Davies (for early departure)

- The President welcomed members to the AGM.
- The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed.
- There were no matters arising noted, all to be covered in today's agenda.

President's report.

- PK thanked Kirsty Hooper for her work on the website and newsletters, and noted that their impact had been very positive.
- She noted that, as can be seen from the former President's remarks at the last AGM in Cambridge April 2004, it was perceived that WISPS had reached a crossroads, or outlived its purpose. However, as the 2005 conference and other events since then had demonstrated, the organization had taken a more challenging direction, become more inclusive, more radical and more vibrant.
- In response to the questionnaire to members, the Study Day in Cambridge in January 2005 had been organized, for which Louise Hayward was thanked, included a round table setting the agenda for future WISPS events. The report from the study day is accessible on the website.
- The 2005 conference has been very successful, for which Claire Williams and Kirsty Hooper and the staff of IGRS were thanked. In particular, it was felt that the RT format had been very successful and should be included in future conferences.
- Forthcoming events: the Writing Retreat in Scotland in December is a pilot concept, designed to encourage action-learning by peer review, to be facilitated by Professor Jean Gilkison (Dean of Research at University of Wolverhampton) and Professor Tony Kaptcia (Professor of Latin American History at the University of Nottingham). Information was available in conference packs and on the web. It was hoped that colleagues who were unable to attend would encourage colleagues to do so.
- The Study day in Sheffield on Jan 28 2006 will focus on 'Creating an External Research Profile', to be organized/facilitated by Anny Brooksbank-Jones, Anja Louis and Carmen Ramos.

- WISPS is considering offering bursaries to help members with childcare or other financial assistance, to enable them to attend WISPS events.
- Par Kumaraswami thanked the outgoing members of the Executive Committee for all their hard work – Jill Ingham as retiring postgraduate representative, Anne Davies as retiring Treasurer, and Lesley Twomey as retiring Secretary.

Treasurer's report.

Ann Davies presented the financial report from 17/3/04 to 16/9/05. The current balance is £3,426.80, viewed as a healthy sum. Members were thanked for their subscriptions. At the last AGM, the Treasurer had been asked to find out whether WISPS was liable for corporation tax, and following discussion with the treasurers of SLAS and AHGBI, it has been ascertained that the WISPS bank account does not qualify for corporation tax. Finally, the Treasurer also reported that a bogus mobile phone account that had taken unauthorized payments from the WISPS account had been cancelled by the bank within 24 hours.

Secretary's report.

The Secretary noted the wording in the Constitution stating 'Two additional members who plan the conference'. A proposal was made to alter the constitution to state 'Two additional members who plan the conference or undertake other tasks as designated by the Committee'. This was proposed by Carrie Hamilton & seconded by Nuria Triana-Toribio.

2 amendments to the Mission Statement were proposed – to delete the phrase 'concerned about' and to include the phrase 'provide professional guidance'. Proposed by CH and seconded by NT.

Website manager's report

Kirsty Hooper plans to include details of previous conferences & study days on the website.

Postgraduate officer

In response to the identified need to contact postgraduates directly, Jill Ingham used the AHGBI database to mailshot 85 postgraduates, informing them about the Conference, the Writing Retreat, & inviting them to join WISPS.

Associate membership

Par Kumaraswami: in an effort to forge better links with overseas organizations, it was discussed that a new membership category, associate membership, could be created for international scholars, without fees but allowing international links to be consolidated. It was agreed that the Executive would explore various models before reporting back at the 2006 AGM.

Anniversary volume

Ann Davies reported that the final manuscript of the articles would reach the publisher in Spring 2006, and that Dorothy Severin has written a preface for this.

Next Conference

Scheduled for Sept. 2006 at the Univ. of Birmingham by kind invitation of Suzanne Meachem and Pat Odber (to be confirmed by PK). Alternative offers are: the Universities of Northumbria and Durham. The focus will continue to broaden, to include language/gender/power.

Membership fees

No change to current rates. Par Kumaraswami reported that WISPS is considering imaginative ways for WISPS to make more of a mark in Hispanism; one idea is to offer Junior Research Bursaries in collaboration with AHGBI. This will be presented as a collaborative initiative between WISPS and AHGBI at the November meeting of AHGBI Executive Committee.

Election of officers

Secretary: none elected, to be co-opted or Lesley Twomey to serve one more year.

Treasurer: Anja Louis elected unopposed 2005-2008.

Postgraduate Officer: none elected, further call to be put out.

Two new members: none elected, further call to be put out.

AOB

Hilary Owen proposed that there be more round tables at the conferences, including a members-only RT. Also that such a round table could lead into the AGM, encouraging more members to remain for the AGM. Claire Williams proposed that topics for these round tables be invited with the conference CFP.

Date of Next AGM

September 2006 at the WISPS annual conference. The meeting closed at 5:45pm.