

**Minutes of the
Annual General Meeting of
The Champlain Society
Saturday, October 25, 2008
City of Toronto Archives, Toronto, Ontario**

Present: Michael Moir, in the Chair, Don McLeod, Secretary, and forty Members of the Society and their guests.

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m.

1. Report of the President: Michael Moir

The President reviewed the activities of the Society for the past year. He noted that there was a marked improvement in the Society's accomplishments during 2008, in several areas. Prof. Adam Crerar's edition of *The Letters of Adam Hope, 1834-1845* was published and has proven to be a popular work, particularly with readers in the region of London and St. Thomas, Ontario. It is the sort of work that appeals not only to our Members but to a wider audience as well.

Prof. Donald Avery and Dr Mark Eaton's volume, *The Meaning of Life: The Scientific and Social Experiences of Everitt and Robert Murray, 1930-1964*, will be published near the end of 2008, either in December or January 2009. This will be the first volume published by the Society that deals with the twentieth century. Volumes in preparation for publication in 2009 include the first volume of Dr William E. Moreau's new edition of *The Writings of David Thompson*, as well as volume one of Prof. Conrad Heidenreich and Prof. Janet Ritch's edition of *The Writings of Samuel de Champlain*.

The finances of the Society are in fine form. During 2008 the Society introduced the Order of Good Cheer, which has led to a marked increase in donations. The Society's membership is stable, and Council will continue to strive to build the membership base. The aim is to increase membership back to its height in the 1970s, which peaked at about 1,200 (including individuals and institutions).

The Society continues its exploration of digital initiatives. Becker Associates has been working on redesigning the Society's website, to ensure a bolder presence and improved e-commerce capabilities. The digital copies of the Society's publications on the Website have proven to be very popular. We intend to add another sixteen volumes to the site, and will continue to add each new volume five years after its publication in paper. In addition, the Society is in the initial planning stages for producing an electronic journal, focused on briefer documents of Canadian history. York University Library will host the journal. An editorial board will be formed shortly; Council members Carolyn Podruchny, Nicole St-Onge, and Bill Waiser have volunteered for the board. Also, the Society will be investigating an exciting new proposal put forward by Allan Hoyle. "The Macdonald Project" involves a cooperative venture between Library and Archives Canada and the Champlain Society. The proposal includes the digitization of the papers of Sir John A. Macdonald (almost completed by Library and Archives Canada) and an on-line,

collaborative editing project using Wiki technology (and based on the editorial expertise of the Champlain Society). This project will greatly increase the accessibility of primary documentation on Canada's first prime minister.

The latest issue of the Society's newsletter, *Pen & Paddle*, was mailed to Members in early October. We have also issued new Champlain Society lapel pins, based on the Society's crest, which will be distributed to all Members.

The Society will be sponsoring a fundraising event early in 2009. Patrice Dutil of Council's Membership and Promotion Committee will be organizing this.

The President ended his report by thanking his colleagues on the Society's Council for their thoughtful contributions. He also thanked Patrice Dutil for chairing the Membership and Promotion Committee, Allan Hoyle for his work on the Business Operations Committee, Germaine Warkentin as chair of the Publications Committee, John Pepall for his work as the Society's Treasurer, and Don McLeod for his work as Secretary. Roger Hall was praised for his patient work as the Society's General Editor. The President noted that this would be the last AGM at which Jeanne Beck would be the chair of the Chalmers Award Committee. He praised her for her long-time stewardship of the Chalmers Award, and for her devotion to Ontario history. *The audience applauded.* Becker Associates was thanked for its work as the Secretariat, and in particular for its management skill and work on rebranding. The President concluded by thanking all Members of the Society, without whom the Society could not continue to publish.

2. Report from the Treasurer: John Pepall

Christine Becker of Becker Associates presented the report, in John Pepall's absence. She noted that there has recently been a great increase in the number of donations to the Society, due to the inauguration of the Order of Good Cheer. She thanked Patrice Dutil for his work in formulating the new structure of the Order.

3. Auditor's Report and Financial Statements, 2007

There was a discussion of the Auditor's Report and The Champlain Society Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 2007, copies of which were available at the meeting.

A suggestion was made from the floor that a copy of the Auditor's Report and The Champlain Society Financial Statements be mailed to Members with the announcement of the Society's annual general meeting.

a) Resolution to Accept the Auditor's Report

Moved by Don McLeod, seconded by Allan Hoyle, that the Auditor's Report for the year ending 2007 be accepted as presented. *Carried.*

b) Resolution to Appoint an Auditor for 2008

Moved by Sandra Alston, seconded by John Warkentin, that J. Michael Mulholland, chartered accountant, be appointed the Society's auditor to complete the audit for the year 2008. *Carried.*

4. Committee Reports

a) Publications Committee: Prof. Germaine Warkentin and Prof. Roger Hall

Committee Members: Germaine Warkentin, Chair, Sandra Alston, Colin Coates, Jane Errington, Bill Harnum, Don McLeod, Michael Moir (ex officio), William Moreau, Carolyn Podruchny, David Wood, and Roger Hall, General Editor

Prof. Germaine Warkentin presented the annual report as chair of the Society's Publications Committee. She thanked Roger Hall, the General Editor, with whom it is always such a pleasure to work. She noted that she is the chair of the committee of which he is a member, and he is the editor who will oversee her edition of the writings of Pierre-Esprit Radisson; their responsibilities are closely intertwined. Prof. Warkentin also thanked the other members of the committee, who as usual have been so helpful over the past year.

The Committee met three times since the 2007 AGM. Prof. Roger Hall will talk about the forthcoming volume *The Meaning of Life*, which will be published before the end of the year, the letters of Harry Cassidy and his wife Beatrice, which are already in production for 2009, and the first volume of our new edition of Champlain. Prof. Warkentin is serving as the Society's editor for one of our major projects, Bill Moreau's new David Thompson edition, which will appear outside our regular series, the first volume in the fall of 2009. That volume is already in production at McGill-Queen's University Press, and will be offered in advance to Members of the Society, in a one-time only edition with the Society's red binding and at a reduced rate. Volumes II and III will shortly follow.

Prof. Warkentin reiterated a point made in her annual report for 2007. At that time she spoke about the great new phase of its history that the Champlain Society was entering, after systematizing our publication procedures and improving the design of our books. The widening of our attention to technological, scientific, and social history and to materials from the twentieth century means that we are now scheduling volumes a decade ahead. For example, a team in Nova Scotia is working very hard on an exciting volume on the Halifax Explosion, for publication in the centenary year of that dreadful event, 2017. And then there are the massive new scholarly editions of three major figures in the history of Canadian exploration that the Society is involved with: David Thompson, Samuel de Champlain, and Pierre-Esprit Radisson.

But how do we get these books – well-edited, peer-reviewed, and beautifully produced – into the hands of the wider public? Our Members know about and appreciate them, as do the scholars who consult them in libraries and on-line. We have a wonderful publishing programme, but because only our Members receive volumes, it is very hard, for example, to get these excellent, scholarly books reviewed in the newspapers or the academic journals. For some time we have been exploring

other ways to make the work of our editors known. A decade ago it was the big experiment of digitizing our books, and that has been an outstanding success. At the present time it is the experiment of sharing publication with an established house; thus the David Thompson edition is a co-production with McGill-Queen's University Press and the University of Washington Press. Indeed, we've recently been told that the State University of New York Press would like to explore collaboration with us on the Champlain volume. In the future we are going to see more of these initiatives, which is a good thing, because publishing in Canada is changing, and we need to change with it.

Just to show how seriously we are responding to that need for change, one of the projects that has been on our agenda this year is Michael Moir's proposal for a peer-reviewed electronic journal which will publish on-line the kinds of well-edited shorter documents that don't find a place in our larger volumes. Michael has developed a full proposal for discussion, and we hope to be able to finalize the details quickly this year. Such a journal will bring us a whole new audience, and will provide a wonderfully flexible medium for the display of archival material of all sorts: not just texts, but possibly even music, photographs, and film.

Prof. Warkentin concluded her report by stating that she believed that the Society has much to be proud of as these projects come to fruition, and our big task is to ensure that the reading public knows it.

Prof. Roger Hall thanked Prof. Warkentin for her work in chairing the Publications Committee, as well as the other members of the committee. He then gave a brief summary of the Society's forthcoming publications:

- Prof. Donald H. Avery and Dr Mark Eaton's *The Meaning of Life: The Scientific and Social Experiences of Everitt and Robert Murray, 1930-1964* should be published by the end of December 2008. It is the largest volume ever published by the Society, more than 800 pages;
- Prof. Conrad Heidenreich and Prof. Janet Ritch's three-volume *The Writings of Samuel de Champlain* is well advanced, with the first volume scheduled for printing in 2009;
- Dr William E. Moreau's *The Writings of David Thompson*. Volume one will be published in 2009;
- Prof. Keith Walden's *The Cassidy Letters* is ready to go to the copy editor, and will be published by the end of 2009.

Other forthcoming volumes by Germaine Warkentin (Radisson), Linda Sabathy-Judd (Moravians), Hector Mackenzie (John Holmes), and Cicely Blackstock and Sandra Alston (William McKenzie) are all moving along as planned.

The team for the Halifax Explosion volume has firmed up. David Sutherland (of the Historic Sites Commission) has been appointed the coordinating editor for the project, which will be published in 2017.

Prof. Hall also mentioned a new proposal that has just been approved by Council: Prof. James Gibson's edition of *The Hudson's Bay Company and the Coastal Trade, 1826-1846*, which will include Russian-language materials.

Questions were invited from the floor. Hugh Anson-Cartwright asked if the Champlain edition of the Thompson co-publication with McGill-Queen's University Press will be distinguished in some way. Prof. Germaine Warkentin replied that the Champlain Society copies will be published in the Society's distinctive red cloth binding, and the trade copies will have their own binding design.

b) Report of the Nominating Committee: Patrice Dutil and Germaine Warkentin

Committee Members: Vacant, Chair; Patrice Dutil

At its meeting of October 25, 2008, Council approved the Committee's recommendation to appoint the following individuals to serve as Councilors for a three-year term to commence on January 1, 2009, and end on December 31, 2011:

Patrice A. Dutil (his third term)
Douglas Gibson (his second term)
Frits Pannekoek (his fourth term)
Germaine Warkentin (her seventh term)
J. David Wood (his second term)

Council agreed that the following individuals be appointed Officers of the Society for 2009:

President:	Michael Moir
Vice-President:	Patrice Dutil
Vice-President:	Allan Hoyle
Vice-President:	Frits Pannekoek
Vice-President:	Germaine Warkentin
Treasurer:	John Pepall
Secretary:	Donald McLeod

Council agreed that the following individuals be appointed Chairs of the standing committees of Council, and be given the authority to appoint committee members as required:

Business Operations:	Allan Hoyle
Membership & Promotion:	Patrice Dutil
Publications:	Germaine Warkentin
Chalmers Award:	Lutzen Riedstra

Council agreed that the Executive Committee consist of the Officers of the Society and Chairs of the standing committees of Council.

Prof. Warkentin and Dutil noted that there are two vacancies on Council, and that Members are encouraged to send nominations to the Nominating Committee.

5. Presentation of the Floyd S. Chalmers Award in Ontario History for 2007: Dr Jeanne Beck

Dr Jeanne Beck paid tribute to the legacy of Floyd Chalmers and briefly reviewed the history of the Floyd S. Chalmers Award in Ontario History before announcing the winner for 2007. There were eighteen submissions, and the winner was Richard Gwyn for his work *John A., the Man Who Made Us: The Life and Times of John A. Macdonald, Volume One: 1815-1867*, published by Random House of Canada. Dr Jeanne Beck chaired the jury, which consisted of Dr Terry Crowley, Department of History, University of Guelph, Dr Françoise Noël, Department of History, Nipissing University, and Dr Brian Osborne, Department of History, Queen's University.

Richard Gwyn was present, received the award of \$2,000 plus an Inuit carving, and made brief remarks and gave thanks to the Society for the award. He briefly discussed his book, and noted that he was delighted with the news of the new proposal for the digital Macdonald project.

6. Presentation of the Speaker: Dr William Moreau

Prof. Germaine Warkentin introduced the speaker for the event, Dr William Moreau, who spoke on his forthcoming edition of *The Writings of David Thompson*. Dr Moreau discussed the challenges presented in editing Thompson's work, and answered several questions from the floor.

Michael Moir thanked Dr Moreau for his interesting presentation.

7. Adjournment

The motion to adjourn was made by Allan Hoyle. The motion was accepted.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m., and was followed by a reception to celebrate the winner of the Floyd S. Chalmers Award in Ontario History.