

**Minutes of the
Annual General Meeting of
The Champlain Society
Saturday, October 15, 2011
City of Toronto Archives, Toronto, Ontario**

Present: Patrice Dutil, in the Chair, Don McLeod, Secretary, and thirty-five Members of the Society and their guests.

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The President asked for a motion to approve the agenda. *Moved by Carolyn Podruchny, seconded by Nicole St-Onge, that the agenda be approved as presented.* Carried.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of October 23, 2010

The President asked if there were any changes to the minutes of the AGM of October 23, 2010. As there were no changes noted, the President called for a motion to approve the minutes. *Moved by Jane Errington, seconded by Roger Hall, that the minutes be adopted as presented.* Carried.

3. Report of the President: Patrice Dutil

Patrice D. discussed the state of the Society's membership, which has been declining for several years, and declined again during 2010. We have an aging membership, and it has been a great challenge to attract new and younger members. Patrice D. wondered about the majority of Canadians who are interested in history but are not connected to the academy. How do we reach them? What is the real benefit to them of membership in the Society? Why should they join? These are fundamental questions that we must answer, and members of Council will devote themselves to building the membership over the next year.

The Journal of Major John Norton 1816 is being printed and is scheduled for release in November. Its publication created a new challenge in that it was a reprint, with a new introduction by Carl Benn. The original volume was published by the Society in 1970, and was in the old format.

Patrice D. has been in touch with Library and Archives Canada (LAC/BAC) concerning the proposed Sir John A. Macdonald Project, which would include providing online transcription and notes for 18,000 documents and letters relating to Macdonald that have already been scanned by LAC/BAC . He sent a letter to them, and received a reply from the Assistant Deputy Minister in charge of LAC/BAC, as well as a call. LAC/BAC is currently reconfiguring itself, but is still interested in the project. Beta testing of the site was carried out with numerous volunteers (including members of the Society) during 2011. The testing was only partially successful; the site works but it is not well-designed and needs to be overhauled. LAC/BAC will work to examine other similar sites in Britain and the United States and will rework the design. We hope that a second round of testing will begin in December 2011, with a possible launch date of July 1, 2012.

Patrice D. also outlined his plan to make an independent application for funding under SSHRC to support the scholarly apparatus of the project. Patrice D. would apply as the principal investigator, with additional contributors. Students could be engaged to do transcriptions, and to add value-added aspects to the site. A decision on the application for funding should be available by April 2012.

Progress is being made on the development of “First Person/Première Personne: The Online Journal of the Champlain Society”; we are investigating funding sources for e-journals, and whether journals that are not institutionally based are eligible for support.

Patrice D. suggested that the Society strike a committee to consider the Grand Chevalier of the Order of Good Cheer for 2012. As with Brian Gable, our first Chevalier, we are looking for Canadians who have made creative use of historical documents in their work but are not professional historians or archivists.

Patrice D. offered his thanks to the membership of the Society, to Becker and Associates for their work as the Secretariat, to Don McLeod for his work as Secretary to the Society and as Chair of the Publications Committee, to Roger Hall, General Editor, to Jane Errington, Vice-President, to John Pepall, Treasurer, to Bill Harnum, and to Michael Eamon for his work on “First Person/Première Personne.”

4. Report from the Treasurer: John Pepall

Auditor's Report and Financial Statements, 2010

John P. announced that the Financial Statements for the year ended December 31, 2010, had been posted on the Society's website in advance of the meeting, and that paper copies were also available for consultation.

There was a loss of \$22,886 for the year 2010, necessitating release of some of the Society's reserve funds. The loss was due mostly to a decline in membership numbers and revenue. John P. indicated that we have been attempting to control expenses, and could perhaps save an additional few thousand dollars per year after reviewing these. He also said that the Society's volume for 2011, *The Journal of Major John Norton 1816*, would not be as expensive to produce.

There were several questions from the floor.

John O'Reilly asked why the copy of the Financial Statements that was provided had not been signed by the Society's directors. John P. explained that the Financial Statements had been signed at a meeting of the Society's Executive Committee.

John O'Reilly asked about the Chalmers Fund, and the fact that the balance is slowly being reduced (from \$55,274 in 2009 to \$53,867 in 2010, for example). Has Council considered how to ensure that this fund will continue in good financial health? John P. replied that interest rates have been low for some time, but he hopes they will eventually rise. The Chalmers Fund was actually in surplus for a few years when rates were high. The Society will try to observe the intentions of the donor of the fund, and will act responsibly and work towards its indefinite continuation.

George Luste asked about the sharp decline in book sales, from \$25,552 in 2009 to \$7,000 in 2010. John P. noted that this was the year that we published volume one of *The Writings of David Thompson*, which was published extra series and accounts for much of the extra book sales revenue in 2009.

Moved by Roger Hall, seconded by Michel Beaulieu, that the financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2010, be accepted. Carried.

Moved by John Pepall, seconded by James O'Reilly, that J. Michael Mulholland, chartered accountant, be appointed auditor for the Society for the year ending December 31, 2011. Carried.

5. Committee Reports

Report of the Publications Committee and General Editor: Roger Hall

Roger H. thanked Bill Harnum for his hard work on behalf on the Society as Chair of the Publications Committee. He reported that Bill H. has stepped down as Chair of the Committee, after two years, to become Vice-President of the Council of the Association of Canadian Publishers (ACP). Bill H. will remain a member of the Publications Committee, and Member-at-Large on the Executive Committee. Roger H. welcomed Don McLeod, who will succeed Bill H. as Chair of the Publications Committee.

Roger H. noted that the Society's 2010 volume, *Samuel de Champlain before 1604: Des Sauvages and Other Documents Related to the Period*, edited by Conrad E. Heidenreich and Janet Ritch, was a monumental work of scholarship and had been well-received.

The Journal of Major John Norton 1816 is being printed and is scheduled for release in November. Its publication created a new technical challenge in that it was a reprint, with a new introduction by Carl Benn. Roger H. thanked Becker and Associates for their help in producing this volume.

Roger outlined the Society's upcoming publications.

Germaine Warkentin's edition of *The Writings of Pierre-Esprit Radisson* is scheduled for publication in 2012. It will be a co-publication with McGill-Queen's University Press.

Norman Hillmer's edition of *O.D. Skelton*, concerning Canadian external affairs in the early and mid-twentieth century, will appear in 2013.

The Society has contracted several other volumes. The timing of their publication will depend on when the final manuscripts are received:

William Ord Mackenzie: The Canadas during the 1830s. Edited by Sandra Alston and Cicely Blackstock.

John Holmes: A Canadian in Foreign Affairs. Edited by Hector McKenzie.

The Halifax Explosion. Edited by David Sutherland, Shirley Tillotson, and Peter Twohig.

The Moravians. Edited by Linda Sabathy-Judd.

The Russians and the Pacific Northwest. Edited by James Gibson.

The Society will be continuing its paper reprint series. The Publications Committee is currently examining several titles for possible reprinting, including Edith G. Firth's volume *The Town of York, 1793-1815*. Roger H. thanked Peter Davis for his assistance in compiling a list of possible reprint volumes.

Report of the Nominations Committee: Jane Errington

On behalf of the Nominations Committee Jane E. expressed heartfelt thanks to the following individuals who are leaving Council after having made a significant contribution to the governance of the Society:

Sarah Carter (2006–11)

Douglas Gibson (2005–11)

The Nominations Committee presented the following slate of candidates to serve as members of Council for the period January 1, 2012, to December 31, 2014:

Renewing Members:

Patrice Dutil

Michael Eamon

Frits Pannekoek

Nicole St-Onge

David Wood

New Member:

Gregory Marchildon, Saskatchewan. Author of *Canoeing the Churchill: A Practical Guide to the Historic Voyageur Highway* (winner of the 2002 Saskatchewan Book Award for Scholarly Writing).

Jane E. asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none.

Moved by Jane Errington, seconded by Peter Davis, that nominations be closed, and that the proposed slate of members of Council for the period January 1, 2012, to December 31, 2014, be accepted. Carried.

Jane E. noted that the Society's by-laws state that the officers of the Champlain Society are to be elected by Council, which was done at the meeting of Council on October 15, 2011. The officers of the Executive Committee of the Champlain Society for the year 2012 are:

President: Patrice Dutil
Vice President: Jane Errington
Secretary: Donald McLeod
Treasurer: John Pepall
Chair, Publications Committee: Donald McLeod
Member-at-Large: Bill Harnum

Members of the audience applauded.

6. Presentation of the Floyd S. Chalmers Award in Ontario History for 2010

Jane Errington served as administrator of the Chalmers Award committee for awarding the prize for 2010. Members of the jury were: Terry Crowley (University Professor Emeritus, Department of History, University of Guelph), Franca Iacovetta (Professor, Department of History, University of Toronto), and Brian S. Osborne (Professor Emeritus, Department of Geography, Queen's University, and Adjunct Research Professor, Carleton University). Jane E. offered thanks to members of the jury on behalf of the Society.

There were nine nominations for 2010; the winner was Michelle A. Hamilton for *Collections and Objections: Aboriginal Material Culture in Southern Ontario, 1791-1914*, published by McGill-Queen's University Press. Jane E. welcomed Dr. Hamilton, read the award citation, and presented the prize of an Inuit sculpture and a cheque for \$1,200. *Members of the audience applauded.*

Dr. Hamilton thanked the Society for the award, and presented an interesting, illustrated talk about her book. She later answered questions from the floor. Jane E. thanked Dr. Hamilton for her presentation. *Members of the audience applauded.*

7. Presentation by Dr. Carl Benn on the Society's 2011 volume, *The Journal of Major John Norton 1816*

Patrice D. introduced Dr. Benn, who is a member of the Society's Council and Chair of the Department of History, Ryerson University. His illustrated talk, "Research Opportunities in the Journal of Major John Norton," was well-received, and he answered several questions from the floor. Patrice D. thanked Dr. Benn for his presentation. *Members of the audience applauded.*

8. Presentation of the Grand Chevalier of the Order of Good Cheer Award

Patrice D. explained the purpose of the award: that it was to recognize people who have made creative use of Canadian historical documents, but who are not professional historians or archivists. He introduced the Grand Chevalier for 2011, Mr. Brian Gable, cartoonist at the *Globe and Mail*. Mr. Gable was presented with a plaque, and thanked the Society for the award. He followed this with a humorous, illustrated talk on how history has inspired him occasionally and helped him to poke fun at today's realities. Patrice D. thanked Mr. Gable for his presentation. *Members of the audience applauded.*

9. Adjournment

Jane Errington moved adjournment at 3:50 p.m.

The meeting was followed by a wine and cheese reception to celebrate the winner of the Floyd S. Chalmers Award in Ontario History, held in the Atrium.