

International Gothic Association

Minutes of Executive Advisory Board meeting

Friday 12th August, 2005

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Montreal

Participants: Steven Bruhm, Charles Crow, Michael Eberle-Sinatra, Michael Gamer, Nancy Gillespie, Jason Haslam, Avril Horner, Bill Hughes, Gilles Menegaldo, Robert Miles, Marie Mulvey-Roberts, David Punter, Andrew Smith, John Whatley, Anne Williams, Angela Wright, Sue Zlosnik.

Approval of previous minutes. Minutes approved.

Business arising: SB reported that numbers of members on the advisory board would increase formally from 15 to 25. Members of the board who have been inactive for the past two years, and who did not respond to the email requesting continuing commitment, would be removed from the Advisory Board list. He also raised the issue of continuing problems with Manchester University Press, and a possible approach for the *Gothic Studies* journal from the publisher Routledge.

Treasurer's report (Angela Wright)

The IGA account currently has £1049.11. We have given out two postgraduate bursaries for attendance at this conference, each coming to the equivalent of £300 each approximately. The commitment to underwrite small one-day conferences to the total of £100 is also ongoing.

5) the journal and the related issue of membership

AW also reported a drop in personal memberships to 44 only, which since she took over as secretary/treasurer, is a dramatic decline from 180 previous memberships. This was explained through ongoing problems with *Gothic Studies* subscriptions, and the problems that tying subscriptions to membership entails for the Association. Further evidence of the ongoing subscriptions confusion was presented: MG reported that although he has paid for seven memberships/subscriptions, he has only received a total of three issues of *Gothic Studies*. His complaint was echoed by several other stories.

The problems were discussed at some length, and several solutions were proposed: the first, and most pressing, to uncouple membership of the IGA from subscription to the journal. BH raised the objection that this may lead to a reduction in subscriptions to the journal, and an interim measure was suggested: that membership is still tied to the journal, but that the treasurer handles the subs, and then passes on the majority of the money to MUP. This way, the Association controls its own membership lists.

To boost membership, a number of options were decided to present at the AGM:

to increase awareness of IGA-sponsored conferences

DP suggested the inauguration of an essay prize from the available funds

An electronic newsletter so that we stay in touch with members regularly

For this year only, free membership, with 25% discount on the journal subscription. (these sheets were subsequently distributed at the AGM, and included a place to sign up for the subsidised subscription). AW noted that MUP still owe the Association £500 for the financial year 2005; the Association could write this off against offering a discounted subscription to the journal.

e) Other options discussed to increase membership included making membership compulsory for people who wished to present at the IGA conference (it was noted that NASSR already does this) No firm decision about this was taken during the meeting

6) the contract with Manchester University Press

MMR suggested that we actively pursue a new contract for the journal with Routledge, which has offices in London, NY and Australia (therefore making subscription handling easier), and would probably support the journal moving to three issues per year. SB was positive about this, but reminded all that there was as yet no commitment from the publisher.

MG proposed a motion to pursue Routledge in the long term, and to address the crisis of membership numbers in the short term. An increase in numbers would also make the journal more attractive to other publishers.

Bill Hughes' report on the state of *Gothic Studies*

BH thanked the members of the advisory board present for continuing to read essays for GS. He praised the quality of the articles, and commented that around 2/3 were rejected at present. There are many special issues waiting (in part a consequence of MUP's decision to reduce the journal to two issues per year). The most recent issue is the Liverpool IGA conference proceedings (7/1) 7/2 will be 'Queering the Gothic' ed. MES; 8/1 will be 'Italy and the Gothic', ed. Maxilien Demata; 8/2 a general issue, and thereafter special issues until 11/1 (2009) A proposal was made to put a general issue online, but it was agreed not to pursue this at present.

SB thanked Bill for his ongoing hard work.

Affiliations with other associations and conferences

SB requested that we formalize the organization of panels at other academic association conferences such as ACCUTE, AMLA, MLA, etc. He reported that the two panels for proposed for the MLA on behalf of the IGA were not accepted last year, but that this affiliation should be pursued.

Advisory Board re-election.

After asking people to indicate their interest in being re-elected to the board, some members did not respond, and were therefore struck off. New members elected were: Carole Davison, Benjamin Brabon and Ken Gelder. Charles Crow suggested that there should also be more American presence on the board, and SB suggested more interdisciplinary representation.

The 2005 conference and beyond

MES and JH that the Montreal conference was going well, and that it came to a total cost of \$60,000 (CD). Only 1/3 of this was covered by registration, so there would be no profit. Thanks were accorded to MES and Joel Falflak (NASSR) for balancing the budget. SB also thanked MES, JH and Jodey Castricano for organizing the IGA conference.

Max Duperray (Aix-en-Provence) and Gilles Menegaldo (Poitiers) spoke about the joint organization of the next IGA conference (2007) in Aix-en-Provence. Possible dates for the conference were discussed (early July or early August), and the potential title of 'Gothic News'.

Website report

JH reported that the IGA website has moved to: <http://gothic.english.dal.ca/>

He asked everyone to update the members' publications page, and noted that the Advisory Board list was out-of-date on the website

Elections of secretary/treasurer and president

SB invited nominations for the posts of president and of secretary (it being decided to split the roles of secretary/treasurer into two with AW remaining as treasurer for the next two years).

Meeting adjourned