

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Unfortunately the scheduling of this year's AGM on a weekday prohibits my attendance and I thank in advance the person who has taken over the secretariat duties.

I am pleased to provide the following report:

1. Update on action arising from the previous AGM

- Development of the policies and procedures document is progressing, perhaps not as quickly as might have been hoped. This task will be completed prior to the next AGM.
- Constitutional amendment – completed (refer item 2)
- Procedures for awarding the title of Fellow of the Society – completed (refer item 3)

2. Constitutional amendment

At the 2002 AGM it was agreed that an amendment to the Constitution be sought involving the deletion of Clause (ii) of Rule 8 relating to the composition of the Publications Committee. It involved the Editor not appointing to the Publications Committee more than one person who is a member of the Executive Committee.

In February this year I wrote to all members of the Society in accordance with Rule 10 of the Constitution, to put the amendment to the vote of all financial members.

The outcome of this vote was that the membership approved the deletion of the clause.

3. Procedures for awarding the title of Fellow of the Society

A process was implemented in 2003 to facilitate the awarding of the title "Fellow of the Society" on appropriately qualified individuals. The process involved the assessment of nominations against the criteria of excellence in one or both of the following categories:

1. Outstanding sports history/ studies scholarship by an Australian or an Australian-based scholar in Australian or international sports history/ studies.
2. An outstanding administrative and service contribution to ASSH.

The Society recognised the contributions of John O'Hara and Colin Tatz by conferring the title Fellow of the Society on them during the official 2003 Sporting Traditions dinner.

4. Correspondence from Honorary Legal Adviser – see attachment

Neville Turner has asked that I bring to the attention of the AGM the enclosed letter from the Department of Justice which "illustrates forcibly what can occur when the Constitution does not comply with the Associations Incorporation Act." Neville points out that "what is of paramount importance is that any proposed amendment must first be vetted to see that it complies with the Act. If there is any doubt, a draft should be sent to the Senior Compliance Officer before the matter be raised at a Special General Meeting – the Officer is usually willing to give a provisional opinion, so that what occurred to the Australian-Sri Lankan Federation's amendments can be avoided."

I bring this matter to the attention of the AGM.

This is a timely piece of advice as the Society is considering making significant changes to its Constitution. I would hope that in doing so, the Society might consider a way of freeing ASSH from its inefficient cycle of meetings. An annual general meeting, understandably, has to be held annually. The Society must also hold a biennial meeting principally for receiving a report from its outgoing office bearers and for electing its incoming office bearers. The biennial meeting is traditionally held at the time of the *Sporting Traditions* conference. It would be useful if the annual general meeting in each second year could be held as part of or in conjunction with the biennial meeting. The financial reporting cycle currently constrains this possibility. I also believe there is general confusion among the membership of the distinction between the annual general meeting and the biennial meeting.

The outcome that I am advocating is to maximise participation of Society members in the affairs of the Society by holding key meetings at the time that most members are gathered together. It may be that the Constitution is not the problem and that there are other ways of operating that we could pursue that would be more effective. I will discuss this further with the Honorary Legal Adviser and the Treasurer.

5. Student prizes

I am pleased to report that the ASSH Dissertation prize for work completed in 2002 was awarded to Naomi Shannon for her work titled: *The Friendly Games? Politics, Protest and Aboriginal Rights at the XII Commonwealth Games, Brisbane, 1982*. Rob Hess is in contact with Naomi over the possible publication of her work.

There was no essay prize awarded this year.

Angela Burroughs
Secretary, ASSH
3 November 2003