

Eugene O'Neill Society Business Meeting

Saturday, May 26, 2018

American Literature Association Conference, San Francisco

Minutes

Present: Steve Bloom, Katie Johnson, Laurie Porter, Carolyn McGovern, Dan McGovern, Peter Hays, Mariette Ogg, Daniel Lerner, Eileen Hermann, Jeff Kennedy, Lauren Luedtke, Janet Roberts, David Palmer, Alex Pettit, Eric Frashier Hays, Robert Dowling, Beth Wynstra

Skyped in: Rob Richter, Sheila Hickey Garvey, Patrick Midgeley, Kurt Eisen

Meeting called to order at 2:10 p.m.

Welcome by Rob Dowling—Rob thanked the Society and reviewed some accolades. Informed members about the international excitement around O'Neill: Rob's recent tour to China, Japanese productions of some of O'Neill's lesser known works, and the New Ross Festival. Rob said his priority will be investigations into South America and Africa.

Sheila Hickey recommended an international conference on sea with a stop in Buenos Aires!

Minutes approved—The minutes from the 2017 meeting in Ireland were approved. Motion by Steve Bloom, seconded by Katie Johnson. Passed unanimously.

Election results—Beth reported that we had the highest voter turnout ever with about 70 people voting in the online election.

New/returning board members will be: Daniel Lerner, Jackson Bryer, Rob Richter, David Palmer, and Jo Morello. Chair of the Board: Steve Bloom

Secretary/Treasurer Report—Beth reported that the Society is in healthy financial shape with our yearly income exceeding our yearly expenses. Membership numbers however are low. Beth advised using some financial resources to grow membership.

Membership conversation

Rob Dowling mentioned a membership position to boost members.

Jeff—Get an Executive Board recommendation for this membership position. We need a brochure. Not just online presence.

Katie—A Google doc has been started to generate ideas about growing the membership. This doc will be circulated to the Society so that everyone can give input.

Rob D.—Vice Presidency should perhaps head the membership/PR element of the Society.

Rob R.—V.P.'s role was organizing the panel sessions at international conferences. Someone will need to be designated to do the panel sessions.

David Palmer-Pointed the three things going on: we need a brochure, we need joint membership ideas, we need a presence at smaller conferences, like NEMLA for instance.

Jeff-There should be pages in translation for international members joining the society/renewing membership.

Steve-The international secretaries should be the ones helping recruit international members.

Katie-Should we do international conferences more frequently than every three years?

Steve-Gave historical background on Katie's question. The worry was always will there be enough papers to fill conferences. Although with fewer papers we would not need concurrent sessions.

Kurt-Should we look to do special events instead of conferences?

Sheila-We could do events around performances. Perhaps NYC for performances?

Katie-Membership numbers don't up with special events.

Rob R-Brought up conference papers. It is usually with papers that people can secure funding.

Eugene O'Neill Review/EONS Newsletter

Kurt-Provided some history: Ireland issue and women's issue were both big issues. Kurt believed we were good for our contract because we had reached the minimum page number. However, we need another issue for this year because PSU press had already put funders in place. So, we need articles!

Kurt also said he needs readers for certain pieces and does not have a hard deadline.

Jeff- Should we come up with a different contract in 2020? To ensure that we have one issue?

Kurt-Our new editors: Patrick Chura, Book Reviews. Katie put forward Alex Pettit for Performance Reviews. Alex agreed!

Kurt-The editorial board will be revamped. He will be checking in with folks about editorial board positions and also holding people accountable for editing.

Jeff-What would an ad for a membership flyer cost? Beth will look into EONS advertising in the *Review*.

Janet-Complimented the Penn State University press editors.

Newsletter:

Rob-Jo Morello is stepping down as Newsletter editor. Rob complimented Jo on her incredible work and efforts on newsletter. We want to go in a new direction on the newsletter so we are quicker on the draw when it comes to releasing Society news and information about performance. Rob wants to put forward Jeff as our new PR person. Beth complimented Jeff on the Facebook page.

Jeff- Gave promising statistics about Facebook. Does the membership want a PDF of material?

Steve-I don't have Facebook; what about members without Facebook?

Rob R-Whatever we do and whatever format is it for members only? Or is it used to drive membership?

Jeff- We should do a membership pitch on Facebook.

Rob D-Only members would get the PDF compiled.

Monte Cristo Cottage

Rob R-Met with Preston and Bonnie to get an update about the Cottage. Learned about their hours. When they are not open, they will do tours. They will have a dedicated staff person this summer, full-time. Rob R. will help with training of this person.

Rob mentioned that Monte Cristo Cottage got funding to do a report on the structure. This report led to significant changes in the Cottage (roof, etc.) Structurally the Cottage is in good shape. There was water damage and mold issues. Things were destroyed.

There is a new Thames River Historic Tour and Monte Cristo Cottage is a stop.

The EON Center would like to do more but they are strapped for people. Rob R mentioned that there used to be an O'Neill Festival in the fall. This past year there was not one. It was always last minute. The EONC is always strapped for people/resources.

And they are not planning to do a Festival this fall again. The EONC cannot take the lead position.

Sheila-Reported that the last time she toured she was very disappointed with how little the tour guide knew. And she also mentioned the mess of archives in the spare room. Sheila is very happy to help in whatever way she can with MC Cottage!

Rob R-wants help from the Society. He needs new ideas. Conn College could be the location for an event, but Rob would like input for ideas around panels, activities, etc.

Jeff-Reported that he has five hours of Lois speaking on film about the Cottage. He spent four days in the basement at the O'Neill Theater Center.

Jeff says that there is a larger discussion about Monte Cristo in regard to the archives there and at the O'Neill Theater Center; the archives are a mess. Preston is open to any help.

Rob R-Empathically stated that the O'Neill Theater Center WANTS activity at Monte Cristo Cottage.

Ex Officio Board Member from The Eugene O'Neill Foundation

Steve-Proposed the motion that the President of the Foundation or his or her designated person would be an ex-officio member of the EONS Board.

Motion seconded by Katie.

This item will go out to membership for an online vote.

There was conversation around which issues should come up for an online vote and which should be voted on in person at business meetings.

Next International Conference

Rob D.-Beth and Steve would be interested in chairing the next International Conference in Boston.

Steve-Reported on the history of conferences, pointing out that we have not been back to Boston since the mid-1990's.

Jeff- Motion to have an international conference in Boston. Seconded by Laurie.

We are going to Boston!

New Ross O'Neill Festival

Dan-Urged O'Neillians to come to the Festival (October 11) and support it in any way they can. This Festival needs to be a success so that it can become an annual event! And so that the Irish Tour Board will continue to support it.

Special Thank Yous

Thank you to David Palmer for his excellent conference organization, specifically the panels and roundtables at ALA!

Thank you to Carole Wynstra for the AWESOME day and hospitality at Tao House!

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's EONS events.

Meeting ended at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Wynstra

Secretary/Treasurer

