

## TRANSACTIONS OF THE NINETY-FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING

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President Charles S. Cole, Jr. convened the Ninety-Fourth Annual Meeting of the Association slightly after 8:00 p.m. in the Pendleton Hall Auditorium of the Academy of the New Church. He welcomed approximately sixty members and guests and commented briefly on the work of the Association during the past year. He advised of a change in the scheduled program in order to bring before the membership a sense of the recent International Swedenborg Publishers Conference in Manchester, England.

Mr. Jerome V. Sellner, representing the Committee for By-Laws Changes and Nominations, and consisting of E. Boyd Asplundh, Esq., Dr. Gregory L. Baker, Dr. Grant R. Doering and Mr. Donald C. Fitzpatrick, Jr., reviewed the By-Laws changes which had previously been circulated by written notice to the membership on April 1, 1991. In addition to minor items for the purpose of updating the last revision of May 24, 1951, the main change involved staggered elections for Board Members, so that one-third would come up for election each year instead of all nine. The changes were duly approved by the membership.

Mr. Donald C. Fitzpatrick, Jr., representing the same committee as above presented the incumbent for President, Prof. Charles S. Cole, Jr., and the nine incumbents for the Board of Directors: viz: Dr. Gregory L. Baker, Dr. Grant R. Doering, Rev. Daniel W. Goodenough, Rev. Andrew J. Heilman, Mrs. Sanfrid E. (Aubrey) Odhner, James L. Pendleton, M.D., Rev. Erik E. Sandstrom, Steven H. Smith, M.D. and Rev. Dr. William R. Woofenden. The above were duly approved by the membership.

According to the By-Laws changes three of the directors are to serve for a term of three years, three for a term of two years and three for a term of one year, the terms to be subsequently determined by lot. At each annual meeting, hereafter, the membership will elect three directors to serve for terms of three years.

Next, Dr. Erland J. Brock, Editor of *The New Philosophy*, presented an overview of the International Swedenborg Publishers Conference which was held in Manchester, England from April 15th to April 18th, 1991. Good feelings and common purpose characterized the forty-four individ-

uals in attendance who represented various countries throughout the world. Dr. Brock continued by chairing the panel presentations which were given by participants at the Manchester Conference, and by Mr. Alan Laidlaw and President Cole.

The Annual Meeting was adjourned at 9:38 p.m. Those present then continued discussion of the evening in the College Commons area of Pendleton Hall where light refreshments were served.

Subsequent to the Annual Meeting at an Organizational Meeting of the Board of Directors the following officers were elected for the 1991-1992 year:

Vice President ..... Willard L. D. Heinrichs  
Secretary ..... Jerome V. Sellner  
Treasurer ..... E. Boyd Asplundh

Lots were drawn by the nine directors elected at the Annual Meeting according to the By-Laws changes which had been adopted, in order to determine terms of office for the forthcoming year.

Gregory L. Baker, Andrew J. Heilman and James L. Pendleton will serve three year terms until 1994.

Grant R. Doering, Aubrey C. Odhner and Stephen H. Smith will serve two year terms until 1993.

Daniel W. Goodenough, Erik E. Sandstrom and William R. Woofenden will serve one year terms until 1992.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jerome V. Sellner, *Secretary*

## **EDITOR'S REPORT**

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I want to focus attention in this report on the annual book sales record of the association. The following charts give the overall picture.

"Annual Sales 1983-1990" shows some interesting features. For the period 1983-86, little effort was made to sell our books, listing them for sale on the inside back cover of *The New Philosophy* being the main advertising tool. In addition to that, our sister organizations and bookstores carried our works and included them in their catalogs.



**1989 SSA BOOK SALES**

\* All titles selling less than 15 copies each

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In 1987 a committee reviewed our pricing structure, and recommended general increases. But the books were still priced at levels below what one would expect for comparable works in the open market. In addition, as the increased number of books sold indicates, more effort was made to advertise our works. The method involved full page advertisements in the association's journal as well as other church related ones. The 1988 figures show an increase in sales revenues but a decrease in titles sold. This reflects two things. First, the increase of prices to levels comparable with those found in the open market; and second, the use of a direct mail marketing program, late that year, designed by a professional marketer with major input from us. We provided copy and illustrative material for a catalog, and guided the marketer to the kinds of clients that we thought our books would appeal to. We also provided mailing lists of our own.

Sales for 1989 reflect the continuing influence of the direct mailing, a second mailing being made in January of that year. The increase in revenue reflected the sale of 329 copies of *Swedenborg and His Influence* newly published that year, as well as sustained sales of *Swedenborg Researcher's Manual* published in the previous year. Increases in sales of Swedenborg's works were also noted. These are included in the "all other titles" part of the pie diagrams.

The sudden drop in sales from 1989 to 1990 clearly reflects the failure to sustain direct mail marketing that seems suited to our circumstances.

Another observation from the pie diagrams is that the first year of publication of a work is the best for sales, not unexpectedly. This is noted for *Swedenborg and His Influence* and *Swedenborg's Journal of Dreams*. Clearly, by being more aggressive with marketing in the year of publication of a book we could increase our sales.

It is noteworthy that although many of our orders were, and still are, placed by book jobbers through whom institutions such as libraries purchase books, the biggest response to the direct mail effort came from lists provided by us. It is clear that we can engage in marketing successfully, and it behooves us to continue this effort.

Respectfully submitted,  
Erland J. Brock, *Editor*

**TREASURER'S REPORT****for year ending April 30, 1991**

BALANCE APRIL 30, 1990 .....		\$74,483.27
Plus Receipts 1990/91		
Dues .....	\$	1,156.21
Subscriptions .....		270.00
Contributions .....		5,071.85
Book Sales .....		5,734.38
Interest .....		4,060.45
Miscellaneous .....		<u>15.00</u>
.....	\$	16,307.89
Less Expenses 1990/91		
New Philosophy (4 issues) .....	\$	4,933.10
Postage .....		450.10
Editorial Expenses .....		3,500.00
Book Publishing .....		6,588.18
Marketing .....		5,016.33
Research .....		8,754.25
Computer Equipment .....		10,728.32
Misc. Office Expenses .....		1,407.44
Travel .....		<u>7,380.31</u>
.....	\$	48,758.03
BALANCE APRIL 30, 1991 .....		\$42,033.13

Respectfully submitted,  
E. Boyd Asplundh, *Treasurer*

## **PANEL PRESENTATIONS—MANCHESTER**

### **□ CONFERENCE, APRIL 15-18, 1991**

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The following is a synopsis of the panel presentations based on a transcript of the recording of the meeting, prepared by the editor. The transcript is available by request to the editor.

Dr. Erland Brock introduced the program by showing some slides of the venue of the conference and its participants. He then outlined the various elements that comprise publishing. Between the author and the reader lie the operations of a publishing house from market analysis to editing and design, from printing to marketing and distribution. He then in turn introduced several speakers who spoke about various aspects of the conference, as summarized in what follows.

The Reverend Don Rose spoke first to the various circumstances in which a person first receives the Writings. He then spoke of the opportune time which exists for translating and disseminating the Writings in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. He noted the work Mr. Leonard Fox is doing in helping to bring the Writings to people in that part of the world through both new translations and extant translations of the Writings in various European languages. He also spoke about the distribution project in Eastern Europe soon to be undertaken by Guus and Aline Janssens of the Netherlands, and of the hope for distribution by Andrei and Elizabeth Kourkov of Kiev.

Mr. Les Sheppard spoke first of the distinction between book distribution, evangelization, and marketing. He then made the following points: Although we, in our own organizations, have different visions and goals, we can engage in joint ventures that benefit us all in our work. He wondered about how we can improve our ability to get books into the mainstream. We need to do more to make our books exteriorly appealing through the use of attractive covers, for example. How can we cooperate to cut the costs of production and marketing? Could we have people from among our ranks who know marketing work for us in our efforts? The success of Mr. Nagashima in Japan is an example of what can be done. He felt that at the next conference we should give more attention to marketing.



Mrs. Carroll Odhner, Director of the Swedenborg Library, focussed her remarks on library data bases, the premier example of which is the world-wide network OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) of which the Swedenborg Library is a member. This database has 22 million records of 11,337 libraries in 24 countries. Mrs. Odhner gave examples of the value of such a system, urging New Church bodies to “make a commitment to catalog their collections in such a database.”

Mrs. Odhner also spoke of a new Swedenborg database hosted by the Swedenborg Library, using Procite, a database management program. She spoke of the need for funding to support the work of entering the titles of all editions of Swedenborg’s works, as well as collateral literature, into the database. This could become an important research and marketing tool of the New Church world-wide.

Dr. Durban Odhner began his remarks by noting that “participants at the recent Manchester Conference would probably accept the comprehensive title ‘Swedenborg Publishers International’ as a description of that assemblage.” The title of his talk at the conference was “Translation as an Avenue to Publication,” and in his talk he spoke of the need for a Pan-World translation Committee to “coordinate translation of Swedenborg and collateral works world-wide...” He felt that there was a favorable response to this idea.

He also stressed the importance of English as the current international language, in much the same way that Latin was in Swedenborg’s time. English copies of the Writings are a great aid to translators trying to translate the Writings into their own languages.

Mr. Göran Appelgren addressed his remarks particularly to circumstances in Eastern Europe. He spoke of committed individuals who secretly circulate portions of Swedenborg’s works among themselves. He reflected on ways to introduce Swedenborg into Eastern Europe. Swedenborg’s election to the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences could prove to be an effective tool in his introduction.

He spoke of the use of desktop publishing and of book-making machines through xerography that permit the low-cost production of short runs of books.

Mr. Leon Rhodes spoke about forms of publishing not on paper, such as tapes, videos, and films. He outlined the value of these, and warned that

the production of quality films and videos requires considerable expertise. The product has to be good to be effective.

He also spoke of the newsletter of which he is editor, originally the International Swedenborg Publishers Conference newsletter, which is now published as *SPI* (newsletter of the newly formed Swedenborg Publishers International). He emphasized the primary purpose of this newsletter which is communication, to keep interested readers informed about the various projects being undertaken to support the work of member institutions.

Mrs. Kirsten Gyllenhaal spoke about desk-top publishing, and her use of new computer technologies to produce camera-ready copy for printers. Production costs are substantially reduced, in part because one has better control in the preparation of camera-ready copy. She also spoke of the use of the jointly owned scanner that allows greater flexibility in our publishing work.

Mr. Alan Laidlaw further elaborated on desk-top publishing technologies, particularly in graphical work using scanning and the Pagemaker program.

President Cole completed the panel presentations with an account of his experience in supervising the production of the new work *The Natural Basis of Spiritual Reality* by Dr. Norman Berridge. Citing *Arcana Coelestia* 9300 which illustrates the interdependence of the will and understanding by reference to that between the heart and lungs, Professor Cole said that that kind of correspondential thinking was what lay at the core of Dr. Berridge's study.

Professor Cole spoke of Swedenborg's seminal work on the brain and the role of fluids in it and the nervous system as a whole.

He concluded his remarks by describing some aspects of the electronic marvels that were employed by Mr. Alan Laidlaw in the computer reproduction of elaborate diagrams drawn by Linda Simonetti Odhner to illustrate Dr. Berridge's work.

The Reverend Don Rose closed the meeting by introducing the playing of the tape of the closing prayer that was offered at the conference by the Reverend Christopher Hasler. Mr. Rose noted that Mr. Hasler was born in Czechoslovakia, and after leaving there in his youth, only returned recently to preach to a New Church congregation. Mr. Rose noted that in

the panel talks emphasis was given to factual accounts of presentations at the conference. The conference had an added affectional dimension; it was a very moving experience for the participants, and a spirit of harmony and goodwill pervaded it. This spirit is conveyed in the closing prayer, which was played for the meeting. The transcription of this prayer now follows:

Let us pray. Lord, Jesus Christ, this week you have made me ashamed; ashamed of my fears, of my suspicions, of my envy. You have made me ashamed of the fear of my own inabilities and helplessness, of my suspicions of other organizations and groups, and different points of view within the New Church, of my envy for the achievements of others and their talents. But you have also taught me not to be afraid because you can use every talent, every true thought, every unselfish affection because these gifts are yours in me. They are the living seeds which grow into trees, into forests. This week you have opened my heart so that I have been able to meet, to embrace, to listen to and love those that I didn't know and saw as strangers. You have cleansed my heart of envy because you have showed me that we are one body, and the talents, the personal gifts, are treasures which enrich me and serve me in my poverty and in my need. You have forced me to see that we are far greater than I have ever believed. You have inspired me by the courage and example of others. You have given me a new vision, a vision to remain united, and to be truly one body so that we shall all be the one spiritual church which is the heart and lungs of mankind. I would like to pray for all those individuals, in all parts of the world who work for Your church, often alone, who meet the discouragement, and yet their love conquers the darkness and they work for You. We pray for them, trust that they will sense our love, and will have our support. You have said: "Behold, I make all things new." Renew my courage, my vision, and my heart every day. Amen.

And now a few verses from psalm 107. "Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He's good, for His mercy endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy and gathered them out of all the lands, from

the east, and from the west, from the north and from the south...Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men. For He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness."



In the Christian world it is doctrinal matters that distinguish churches; and from them men call themselves Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists, or the Reformed and the Evangelical, and by other names. It is from what is doctrinal alone that they are so called; which would never be if they would make love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor the principal of faith. Doctrinal matters would then be only varieties of opinion concerning the mysteries of faith, which truly Christian men would leave to every one to hold in accordance with his conscience, and would say in their hearts that a man is truly a Christian when he lives as a Christian, that is, as the Lord teaches. Thus from all the differing churches there would be made one church; and all the dissensions that come forth from doctrine alone would vanish; yea, all hatreds of one against another would be dissipated in a moment, and the Lord's kingdom would come upon the earth. (AC 1799:4)