

# HISTORY OF ECONOMIC THOUGHT SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

## Business Meeting – Twelfth Conference

Australian National University

Friday, July 16, 1999

Fifteen members were present. Ian Kerr was in the Chair. John Lodewijks acted as minute secretary. The meeting commenced at 9.10 a.m.

1. Minutes of the July 1998 meeting at the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur were confirmed.
2. *Matters arising* - Ian Kerr indicated that these issues would be discussed as specific agenda items listed below.
3. *Chief Executive Officer's Report and Financial Report:*

After very strong growth during the 1990s, membership of HETSA had in the last two years stabilized at around 170 members, of which 40 per cent were overseas members. There was, however, scope for increased library subscriptions. It was suggested that wider circulation of the membership list might also be useful to ascertain those who should be on the list but are not currently subscribing. The circulated HETSA Income and Expenditure Statement and Balance Sheet (as at 30 June 1999) showed a closing balance of \$17,467.

Members' subscriptions amounted to \$2379 and interest on accumulated funds came to \$1053. The major expenditure item was a deficit on the Fremantle conference of \$2216. Overall there was a net loss for 1998/99 of \$349, but expenditures included an advance payment of \$400 to the organizers of the Sydney 2000 HETSA Conference.

The CEO noted that with the end, after eight years, of financial support from UNSW and the disappearance of HETSA conference surpluses, the Society would have to carefully monitor future expenditures. It was also noted that we needed more publicity in future to attract candidates for the HETSA prizes.

Ian Kerr was congratulated on his Report and on the healthy financial position that the Society finds itself in, with accumulated funds in excess of \$17,000.

4. *HER Editor's Report:*

The editor began by saying how much he had valued his working relationship with Ian Kerr over the last eight years. Ian had brought a very professional approach to his HETSA duties which saw its membership expand and its financial position improve rapidly.

Two issues of the *History of Economics Review* had been published since the last conference. The editor was encouraged by the journal's growing reputation, as demonstrated by citations in leading journals, the number of requests he had received to reprint *HER* articles, and the fact that *HER* articles had led to book publications.

The editor indicated that while the journal could continue in its present format, there was an opportunity to be more adventurous. *HER* had attained a higher standing than its predecessor the *HETSA Bulletin* but there was room to achieve even more. There was still a relatively untapped foreign library market and the option of associating with a publishing house. The latter would most likely lead to a hike in subscription fees and an increase in the number of issues published per year, and impose more rigidity on the production schedule. Nevertheless, it may provide a more professional marketing approach and copy editing skills. Subscription administration would also be handled by the publishing company, relieving the CEO of his more irksome responsibilities. These were all issues that a new *HER* editor could explore and bring to the membership.

#### 5. *Venice Summer School and ESHET Conference*

The Summer School proposal was shelved by the ESHET although there will be a Ph.D seminar just prior to the ESHET 2000 conference for doctoral students. There was no strong support among HETSA members to offer financial support for students attending this seminar.

#### 6. *Future HETSA Conferences*

Peter Groenewegen provided details of the 2000 HETSA conference at the University of Sydney. The University of Auckland was eliminated as a possible venue for 2001 and other universities, including the University of Tasmania, would be approached to host the conference. (After the Conference, William Coleman agreed to run HETSA 2001.)

#### 7. *Election of Office Bearers*

The CEO and Editor of *HER* both indicated that they would not be standing again as candidates. Both were congratulated for their contributions to the Society's impressive growth in terms of membership, finances and the quality of the Society's journal. Ian Kerr stated that John Lodewijks had done a magnificent job of revamping and upgrading the society's journal and that the quality of the *History of Economics Review* was largely responsible for the significant growth in society membership during the 1990s.

Tony Endres was elected unopposed as the new Chief Executive Officer.

John King was elected unopposed as the new Editor of the *History of Economics Review*.

#### 8. *Other Business*

Members made a number of suggestions:

- (i) that the feasibility of an Archive project dealing with the history of HETSA be explored, and Society documents (complete set of the society's publications, conference papers, editorial files etc.) be collected and stored. Ian Kerr indicated that he had many of these documents and would be happy to hand them over if a suitable home could be found for them.

- (ii) that HETSA set up its own Web site and that it be administered by someone with expertise in this area. HETSA currently has a site associated with the American HES.
- (iii) that HETSA prizes include back issues of the Society's publications.

Finally a very warm vote of thanks was given to Grant Fleming (and Selwyn Cornish and the Humanities Research Centre) for organizing such a splendid conference in the appropriately named HOPE building. The conference environment was excellent and the way the sessions were organized facilitated very healthy discussion of the papers presented.

The meeting closed at 10.00 a.m.