

Minutes / Procès-verbal

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MINUTES / PROCÈS-VERBAL

ANNUAL MEETING CANADIAN COMMITTEE ON LABOUR HISTORY TORONTO, 30 MAY 2006

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE (23)

Clément, Dominique
Dooley, Chris
Finkel, Alvin
Frank, David
Goutor, David
Hannant, Larry
Heron, Craig
Hinther, Rhonda L.
Jameson, Betsy
Kealey, Greg
Korneski, Kurt
Kristofferson, Rob

Lang, Nicole
Loch-Drake, Cindy
McPherson, Kate
Naylor, Jim
Palmer, Bryan
Sangster, Joan
Taylor, Jeff
Thiessen, Janis
Thomas, Peter
Thompson, Josephine
Whitfield, Irene

AGENDA

M/S/C: To adopt the agenda as presented.

M/S/C: To adopt the Minutes of the last meeting as presented in *Labour/Le Travail*, 56 (Fall/automne 2005), 391-395.

BUSINESS ARISING

None.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

David Frank commented favourably on the number of papers on labour themes in many sessions at this year's Congress, even in sessions that were not explicitly about labour history. He noted that the Sunday CCLH workshop held at the Steelworkers' Hall, "Organized Labour, Immigrants, and the Urban Experience," was one of the more successful and diverse workshops sponsored by CCLH. There was excellent representation from the immigrant communities, activists, and researchers. Thanks were expressed to the graduate students from York University who organized the event: Eric Strikwerda, Cindy Loch-Drake, Todd Stubbs, and Susana Miranda.

Members present were encouraged to attend the Hotel Workers Rising event in support of Toronto hotel workers. Members were also invited to attend the Kenny Lecture by Jean-Claude Parrot, winner of the 2006 Robert S. Kenny Prize in Marxist and Labour/Left Studies.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Greg Kealey presented the financial report. The report was accepted by members present.

Members were invited to submit proposals for book projects to the CCLH for consideration. One title is currently in production, a personal account of the struggle against wage and price controls in 1975-1976 by George Vair, a former president of the Saint John and District Labour Council.

EDITOR'S REPORT

Bryan Palmer noted that *Labour/Le Travail* has produced two more excellent issues on time, and invited members to submit manuscripts. Those wishing to review books were asked to contact the *L/LT* book editor Alvin Finkel. A new French-language book editor will be appointed shortly.

The situation with Memorial University continues to be problematic, though the staff are excellent and the infrastructure is good. Memorial had requested a fee for service, and the journal is now paying it. The suggestion that the journal might leave Memorial has eased for the moment, and the journal appears to be a factor in the university's discussion of plans to establish a university press.

Irene Whitfield will be retiring this year. Josephine Thompson will replace her for the time being, as a restructuring of the Faculty of Arts Publications Centre is in

the works. This may affect the delivery of the next issues of the journal, but editorial work is currently well in hand.

Bryan Palmer thanked the staff, board, and readers of *Labour/Le Travail*, and asserted that the journal continues to be extremely good value for the subscription price, perhaps the best value available.

EUGENE FORSEY PRIZE

Anne Toews, University College of the Fraser Valley, was the winner of this year's undergraduate prize for a paper entitled "The Communist Party of Canada and the Women's Labour Leagues"; the graduate prize has been awarded to Sean Purdy for his Queen's University doctoral dissertation, "From Place of Hope to Outcast Space: Territorial Regulation and Tenant Resistance in Regent Park Housing Project, 1949-2001." The prizes were to be announced at the President's Gala of the Canadian Historical Association and the citations to be printed in the *CHA Bulletin*.

Volunteers to serve vacancies arising on the prize committees were invited. Normally committee members serve three-year terms, so there is rotation and continuity in the committee membership. Notices soliciting submissions were printed in the *CHA Bulletin* and posted on H-Labor and H-Canada, among others. Past winners of the prize and other details are listed on the CCLH website at <<http://www.mun.ca/cclh/Forsey.html>>.

REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A brief report from Franca Iacovetta was read. She thanked everyone for making the Labouring Feminism conference last fall a success, and noted that many publications are forthcoming as a result. Those who had been present at the conference are making plans to establish a permanent international network. A conference on the same theme will be held in Europe in the future. Appreciation was expressed to the CCLH for supporting graduate student attendance at the conference.

It was announced that Ben Isitt, doctoral candidate at University of New Brunswick, has won the Graduate Research Paper Award of the Labor and Working Class History Association. He will be presenting his winning paper at the North American Labor History Conference in Detroit in October.

Joan Sangster has published a note on the new SSHRC Research Cluster "Work and Society in Historical Perspective" in the Spring 2006 issue of *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*. The members of the cluster do not believe that it will expand its mandate as had been originally intended, due to funding limitations. The focus of the cluster has been on internationalization, popularization, and dissemination. As part of this initiative, Mark Leier is producing a graphic novel on the history of May Day. Meetings are being held with labour movement leaders. Jeff Taylor is creating a web-based clearing house on research in labour

history. Bryan Palmer is coordinating a workshop with international editors of labour history journals.

The websites for the New Brunswick (<<http://www.lhtnb.ca>>) and Alberta (<<http://www.labourhistory.ca>>) labour history projects were promoted.

The Canadian Oral History Association is re-organizing itself. CCLH members were invited to join. The new COHA website is at <<http://canoha.freeculture.ca/>>.

Marcel van der Linden is founding a new international subset of the defunct history of social movements group. Sessions will be held at the International Economic History Congress in Helsinki in August.

CCLH WORKSHOP, 2007

Suggestions for organizers and topics for a CCLH workshop at next year's congress, to be held in Saskatoon, were invited by the president.

SPECIAL REPORT: IRENE WHITFIELD

In 1981, *Labour/Le Travail* left Dalhousie University for the Memorial University of Newfoundland, and the following year Irene Whitfield was hired to work half-time for the journal. Since then, she has been responsible for the production of 50 issues of the journal and has managed two editors, and multiple interns, book editors, and copy editors, as well as hundreds of contributors. Her professionalism has made *Labour/Le Travail* the kind of journal where people want to be published. The CCLH book publishing programme has also flourished under her management. Irene has provided formal and informal assistance to other journals, editors, and staff, and has played an active role in her own union. Irene was thanked for almost 25 years of professionalism and rigour. She has regarded the journal and the CCLH less as a job and more as a commitment. The health of the journal and of the CCLH are due in large part to her prudent and efficient management. David Frank paid tribute to Irene Whitfield for her many years of service to the CCLH, as did Bryan Palmer on behalf of the journal, the latter presenting Irene with a gift in recognition of her service and retirement. The editor had also organized a retirement dinner for Irene on Sunday evening, which was attended by many current and past members of the editorial board.

Irene Whitfield responded by recalling that she began with *L/LT* as an intermediate clerk/stenographer, and, with the support of the editor, was successfully re-classified by the university as managing editor in 1989. She thanked the CCLH and observed that she was leaving the journal in good hands.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Last year, David Frank (University of New Brunswick) was elected to a one-year term as president, Joanne Burgess (Université du Québec Montréal) was elected to a two-year term as vice-president, Greg Kealey (University of New Brunswick) was elected to a two-year term as treasurer, and Janis Thiessen (Westgate Mennonite Collegiate and University of Winnipeg) was elected to a two-year term as secretary.

At this stage, past president Joan Sangster took the chair. In order to allow for staggered terms, as provided in the constitutional amendments of the last year, nominations were opened for a two-year term for president. Motion by Craig Heron, seconded by Kate McPherson, that David Frank be nominated. There were no further nominations and the president was elected by acclamation.

OTHER BUSINESS

The tote bags distributed at Congress were made by a Somali immigrant women's group in Toronto. The organization had approached Congress asking how they could help. These bags are the first Canadian-made bags to be distributed at Congress in recent years.

Peter Thomas spoke for the editors of *Historical Materialism*, expressing their pleasure at the contacts they have made at the Congress. The journal is looking to expand its international perspective and requests contributions from members of the CCLH and graduate students in the area of critical Marxism. Members were asked to encourage their institutions to subscribe to the journal. Their website is part of Brill Academic Publishers (<www.brill.nl>), but they will soon have their own website.

ADJOURNMENT

Members present adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Eugene A. Forsey Prize in Canadian Labour and Working-Class History

Thanks to an anonymous donor, the Canadian Committee on Labour History (CCLH) is pleased to announce the 12th Eugene A. Forsey Prize competition. The CCLH, with the consent of the late Dr. Forsey's family, chose to name it in his honour because of his pioneering work in the field of Canadian labour history. Dr. Forsey, Research Director of the Canadian Congress of Labour and later the Canadian Labour Congress, also served on the committee which founded *Labour/Le Travail*.

The CCLH invites submissions for the 12th Forsey prize competition for graduate and undergraduate work on Canadian labour and working class history.

Prizes are awarded annually for the best undergraduate essay, or the equivalent, and for the best graduate thesis completed in the past three years. Separate committees, established by the executive of the CCLH, will award the prizes.

The committees, like *Labour/Le Travail* itself, intend to interpret widely the definition of Canadian labour and working-class history. Undergraduate essays may be nominated by course instructors, but nominators are limited to one essay per competition. Additionally, authors may submit their own work. Essays not written at a university or college may be considered for the undergraduate awards.

For the graduate prize, supervisors may nominate one thesis per competition or an author of a thesis may submit a copy. Submissions of both MA and PhD theses are welcome. Theses defended on or after 1 May 2004 are eligible for consideration in the current competition.

The deadline for submissions is 1 June 2007. Prizes will be announced in the Fall 2007 issue of *Labour/Le Travail*. Four copies of essays and one copy of a thesis must be submitted for consideration to Forsey Prize, Canadian Committee on Labour History, Faculty of Arts Publications, FM 2005, Memorial University of Newfoundland, FM 2005, St. John's, NL A1C 5S7 CANADA.