

found that the I.C.A. Committee on Automation was meeting concurrently — and that was the most useful thing for her to attend. Incidentally it really takes at least two in combination to cover such a Congress adequately.

My final point is that there could be a special arrangement whereby 'situation reports' from various countries (no longer than could be read in five minutes) who wish to make them could be pre-distributed and included in the proceedings without the formality of having them read to the detriment, as I suggest above, of direct discussion of professional or technical questions.

However let me repeat, I do not want to end on a critical note. Within the necessary constraints, the Congress was marvellously run; the parallel meetings of the Society of the American Archivists widened the professional and personal scope for useful discussion. In this respect my only regret was that duty prevented me attending the S.A.A. session called, if memory serves, 'Archival P.R. — the Biggest Bang for the Buck'.

## **AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF ARCHIVISTS: BY-LAW No. 1**

### **Regional Organization**

1. In this by-law 'region' means an area in which five or more members of the Society normally reside or work and which is of such a size as to permit regular meetings of members being held and 'regional' has a corresponding meaning.

2. (1) Regions shall be designated as such by the Council of the Society.

(2) The existing regions are Adelaide, Canberra, Brisbane, Hobart, Melbourne and Sydney.

3. Members of the Society in any region may if they wish organize themselves either as a regional group or as a regional branch:

Provided that, members of the Society residing or working in centres other than those designated as regions may elect to be regarded as members in a designated region for the purposes of this and the two succeeding clauses and may take part in the activities of the regional group or branch:

Provided further that no person may be a member of more than one regional group or branch.

4. A regional group shall consist of a Convener and the other members in the region.

5. A regional branch shall consist of a Committee and the other members in the region.

6. A regional group or branch gathered in general meeting may adopt local rules which are not inconsistent with the Rules of the Society or this by-law to regulate its own activities, operations and administration.

7. (1) The Convener of a regional group shall be elected annually at a general meeting of which due notice has been given to all members in the region.

(2) The Convener shall be a professional member of the Society and shall be elected by all classes of members attending the general meeting referred to in sub-clause (1) of this clause.

8. (1) The Committee of a regional branch shall consist of a Chairman, a Secretary/Treasurer or Secretary and Treasurer and such other members as the members of the region in general meeting shall decide.

(2) The Chairman of a regional branch shall be a professional member of the Society but both professional and associate members shall be eligible to be elected to other Committee positions.

(3) The Committee of a regional branch shall be elected annually at a general meeting of which due notice has been given to all members in the region.

- (4) All classes of members shall be eligible to vote in the election of the Committee referred to in sub-clause (3) of this clause.
9. (1) Conveners and Committees shall open bank accounts in the name of their regional group or branch into which they shall pay all moneys received from the Treasurer of the Society and such other, locally-raised moneys, as the local rules of the group or branch may require, and from which shall be drawn such moneys as may be necessary for carrying on the activities of the group or branch.
- (2) The operation of the bank account shall be in accordance with any local rules which the group or branch may make.
- (3) The Convener or Committee shall keep accurate financial records and shall, not later than 31 August in each year, transmit to the Secretary of the Society a copy of the financial statement for the preceding financial year.
10. Conveners and Committees shall as soon as possible after any meeting of the group or branch cause to be transmitted to the Secretary and Editor of the Society copies of the minutes of that meeting.
11. (1) When in the opinion of a Convener, Committee, or one fifth of the members of a region a question was decided at a meeting of the group or branch at which the attendance was unrepresentative of the whole membership of the region, the Convener, Committee or members may request the Secretary of the Society to hold a postal ballot of the members in the region on the question.
- (2) On receipt of such a request the Secretary of the Society shall forthwith hold such a ballot of the regional membership.
- (3) Such a ballot shall conform as nearly as possible to the provisions of the Society's Rules relating to the holding of ballots concerning questions decided at general meetings of the Society.
- (4) On the completion of such a ballot the Secretary shall notify the Convener or Committee of the result and shall cause the result to be published in the next issue of the Society's *Bulletin*, such publication being a sufficient notification to the membership of the region.
- (5) Notwithstanding anything in sub-clauses (1) and (2) of this clause, if in the opinion of the Executive Committee of the Society a request from the members of a group or branch is vexatious and does not represent a genuine grievance, the Executive Committee may direct the Secretary to refuse the request.
12. Regional groups and branches may conduct such activities within their regions or in conjunction with other regions as are consistent with the objects of the Society and conducive to the development and education of their members and to the development of their opinions on questions relating to the profession, but no group or branch shall purport to speak on behalf of the Society, except with the permission of the Council of the Society.

The foregoing by-law was made by the Council of the Society in accordance with Rules 8(4) and 34 of the Society.

MICHAEL SACLIER,  
President

#### **Explanatory Notes**

By-law No. 1 was drafted by me at the direction of Council (given at its meeting in Sydney on 13 November 1976) and the draft submitted to a postal ballot of Council members.

The intention was to provide a very broad framework which would both give a measure of consistency between regional organizations and encompass as far as possible the *de facto* arrangements in the already organized regions. The views expressed by the Sydney and Adelaide groups were taken into serious consideration in the drafting.

It should be made clear that the intention was not to produce a permanent, watertight by-law which would cover every eventuality. Rather, the idea was to provide a basis for local organization which would meet immediate needs as simply as possible and be amended as experience and further consideration should show to be desirable.

The following notes are intended to point out some of the reasoning behind the various provisions, to bring to notice some of the changes suggested by two members of Council which other members may well wish to take up, and to give an indication of the areas which it was felt could and should be left to the good sense and judgment of the membership in the regions—at least until experience might show the necessity of making specific rules.

By-laws are, by Rule 8 (4), made by the Council of the Society. Any professional member may propose to a general meeting a resolution directing the Council to make or amend a by-law in specific terms. A general meeting may, of course, disallow a by-law or any part thereof (Rule 8 (4) (c)).

**Clauses 1 and 2:** Some comment has been made on the fact that the regions have been designated by city rather than by State. In practice I think it will be found that this makes little difference. The choice was made for a number of reasons. It was felt that it was more convenient to designate (say) a new Wollongong region and then an Armidale region than to have to divide and redivide a N.S.W. region. The present usage also provides better for what might be seen as being the most likely new region outside the capital cities in the next few years—Albury-Wodonga—which could conceivably be a bone of contention between N.S.W. and Victorian regions. As long as the present situation of the overwhelming majority of the membership (particularly the professional membership) living and working in the capital cities obtains, the present system of designation will represent *de facto* State regions (particularly given the effects of the provisos to cl. 3), but when that situation changes and new regions are formed this system will also offer some protection against bickering about splintering which is inherent in State-based organizations. It is assumed that new regions will be designated by Council as required at the request of members in those areas, although Mr. Lemon would prefer a formal mechanism to that end.

**Clause 3: (a)** The idea of having two forms of organization is to give an option (i) to the smaller centres where a full committee would involve the likelihood of the Committee members being more numerous than the non-Committee members, and (ii) to those regions which might not care for the full panoply of formal organization, even though numerous enough to supply it.

(b) The provisos are an afterthought to deal with the intention (always implicit, but not originally spelled out) that as far as possible every member of the Society should have the option if he or she wishes to belong to a regional grouping. The second proviso merely aims at equalising rights as between members. The provisos were necessary also to legitimise the *status quo* in those centres (like Sydney) where members from outlying centres such as Wollongong and Armidale have been taking an active part in the activities of the group.

(c) Mr Lemon raised the question of the formation of sub-groups in a region but I would regard this as a matter for the local group or branch to decide on.

**Clause 6:** Mr Fischer feels strongly that local rules should be subject to the approval of Council and others may well share his feeling. On the other hand a local rule which is inconsistent with the Rules of the Society will be void and will no doubt be amended when that fact is brought to the attention of the group or branch concerned. If problems arise an amending by-law will simply have to be made.

**Clauses 7 and 8:** Conveners and Chairmen must be professional members. Mr Fischer doubted whether it was wise or necessary to exclude associate members from these offices. Mr. Lemon feels that all office bearers should be professional members. There will probably be a division of opinion on the matter throughout the membership. The reason for the provision is that since this is basically a professional Society (as indicated by the Rules adopted at the inaugural meeting) the chairmanship should be held by a professional archivist. But, at the same time, since regional activities are the ones which are most likely to affect associate members it was felt that they deserved a larger say in that area.

**Clause 9: Sub-cl. (1).** Mr. Lemon has suggested the desirability of laying down that the bank account ought to be a cheque account—preferably of the interest-bearing 'Society' kind—but rather than face the difficulties of nomenclature involved I would prefer to leave the matter to the good sense

of the local groups and their Treasurers. The Society's Rules incidentally do not make such a stipulation. *Sub-cl. (3)*. The object is, of course, to introduce an element of prudent oversight of the local expenditure of the Society's funds. It is assumed that the local rules will provide for audit. *General*. In the course of drafting the by-law I did consider including a provision that, in the event of the winding up (or death by apathy) of a group or branch, residual funds would revert to the Society as a whole, but in the interests of brevity I abandoned the idea, feeling that, in any case, the amounts involved and the likelihood of such a provision being needed would be so small as not to warrant the inclusion of such a clause. Mr Fischer feels that such a clause should be included and others may share that view.

**Clause 10:** Since the object of this clause is to ensure the regular and speedy communication of information it will be necessary for the unconfirmed minutes of meetings to be sent, a point which escaped me in the initial drafting.

**Clause 11:** This clause is aimed at resolving differences which may arise, quickly, cleanly and finally. Mr Lemon strongly objects to this provision, believing that this should be left in the hands of the local group. It was made a matter for the Society's Executive (a) because it seemed to me preferable to have an independent arbiter, (b) because it will save the local group expense and (c) because it gives the Society's Executive Committee a chance to guard against frivolous demands for ballots which a local committee might not be able to resist. On this last point, sub-cl. (5) is aimed at a situation where (say) a petition is received from two members in a 9 member region against a decision carried by a majority of six to one. No doubt the same effect could be achieved in other ways, but not so economically.

MICHAEL SACLIER