

Report of the ESHS General Assembly in Maastricht, 6 November 2004

President's introductory remarks :

After reviewing the general purposes of the society, R. Fox came back to the conditions of the election of the council at the society's first General Assembly in October 2003.

Since the normal duration of a council is supposed to be two years, whereas in this case the council had been elected only one year before, the President asked the General Assembly to extend the various mandates for two more years (until the next General Assembly). This would allow the next council for 2006-2008 to be elected during the General Assembly due to be held in 2006. He also asked the members to approve the creation of three new offices in the council which were not initially included in it: a webmaster, an editor of the newsletter, and a public relations officer. The General Assembly elected to these new positions C. Rabier (Webmaster) and S. Werrett (editor of the newsletter).

Treasurer's report :

Proceeds:

German Account: 459.48 € (deducted 0.52 € bank fees)

Swiss Account: 225 €

English Account: 146.02 £

Membership fees collected in Bologna: 18x20= 360 € (cash)

Membership fees collected in Maastricht: 1680 €.

Expenses

40 € for the payment of the announcement of the founding of the society in the „Journal Officiel de la Republique Francaise“

450 € for the Webdesigner for our Logo.

100 € to Stephanie Dupouy for different small expenses (stamps, paperware etc.)

Property of the Society after the Conference in Maastricht:

German Account: 459.48 €

Swiss Account: 225 €

English Account: 146.02 £

Cash: 1450 € (to be deposited in the German Account)

+100 Euros (entrusted to S. Dupouy)

Total resources: ca. 2.335 € + 146.02 £

Secretary's report :

- Report on the current state of membership : 60 Members at the end of the Maastricht Conference.
- What do the members get for their membership at the moment ? The newsletter.

- What would we like to offer to our members in the future? Discount for ESHS conference ; travel grants for students participating in ESHS conferences ; a website ; and a journal

Webmaster's report:

In Spring 2004, C. Rabier had been asked to take charge of the future ESHS's website. During the following 6 months, she launched a provisional site on the domain www.eshs.org, which includes information about the Society (statutes and members) and the two first numbers of the ESHS Newsletter. She also asked the Council to approve the commissioning of a professional designer to create a visual identity for the Society. The logo and graphic chart are now completed.

In the coming year, she hopes to develop an internet interface in order to allow any future member to join the Society via the Web.

As far as planned developments of the website are concerned, she is convinced—and wishes to convince the General Assembly—that the website could become an extraordinary tool for the Society and for the European community of historians of science.

First, it can prove very useful from the professional point of view, as it will centralize and present in an organized way important information, now scattered, about grants, prizes, job positions, etc. Further, it will map the existing institutions for the history of science, i.e. laboratories, departments and national societies, in Europe. In a more distant future, it can also supply a database of individuals, either members or professionals and a list of PhD in the field.

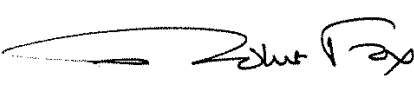
The ESHS website may also become a core instrument for research in history of science. One idea was raised in the Council, which is to develop for European history of science, the same tool that the mathematicians have been using for the past few years (Mathematics ArXiv)—supported by the National Science Foundation and other sponsors—in order to publish preprints of papers submitted to a scholarly journal. As the mathematics experience has proved, such database will foster and accelerate intellectual intercourse within the community. Last but not least, the Society may be interested to promote a European e-journal for the history of science. Even if such a format is not yet well valued by professionals in the field, the electronic journal offers many advantages in terms of cost, access, indexing, search engines, which will not last underrated for long. Both the preprint database and the journal will be showcases for research in European history of science.

To conclude, she would like to invite any member interested in promoting those or new projects, or would like to help in finding sponsors, and in discussing contents, to join the informal Website committee.

Discussion by delegates to the General Assembly :

- Prof. Helge Kragh suggested that, instead of creating its own journal, the ESHS might simply take over an existing journal. He mentioned that Centaurus may be interested in this possibility in the future, including some appropriate modification to its content.
- What is exactly an institutional membership? Does it mean that all the persons belonging to the institution will get the newsletter, for example? R. Fox's answer was that in the case of an institutional membership only the institution, and not the members of this institution, become ESHS members, so that the latter would not receive the newsletter individually.

- The council agreed on the importance of integrating the historians of science of the countries of the former Eastern block and inviting representatives from these countries to join the scientific committee.
- The same question was raised concerning the integration of historians of technology in the committees of ESHS.
- Vote on the location of the next ESHS conference. There was a single proposal for Cracow by Michal Kokowski, which was accepted by the General Assembly.

 (President)
10 June 2006