

93-1 Revised Minutes of the meeting of the Council of the Meteoritical Society

held at the Lunar and Planetary Institute, Houston, Texas at 2.00 p.m. on Sunday 14th. March, 1993.

Present: H. Wänke (President), E. Anders (past President), M. M. Grady (Secretary), C. Chapman, D. Papanastassiou, T. Swindle.

Apologies: M. Ebihara, J. Goswami, D. Stöffler,

Guests: G. Faure (item 5); P. Jakeš, T. King, (item 4); M. Lipschutz, D. Macdougall, D. Sears (item 5).

Note that several Council Members had intended to be present at the meeting, but were prevented from so doing by snowstorms on the eastern part of the U.S.A.

1. President's Report

1.1. The President asked Council if they would accept a change in the Agenda, to allow Faure's report on GCA (item 5.2) to be given before item 4. This would allow Faure to leave the meeting before any sensitive items on finance were discussed. Council accepted the change unanimously. (*Faure's report will appear under item 5 in these minutes*)

1.2. On behalf of Council, the President thanked past President Anders for all his efforts during a troublesome period in the Society's history. The President expressed the hope that he could follow in Anders' footsteps, but that his time in office might be less difficult.

1.3. The President noted that Pam Jones was leaving the LPI. It was resolved that the Meteoritical Society should honour her long service in some way.

Action: Wänke will organise a bouquet of flowers to present at the barbecue on Wednesday night. (*It was later discovered that Pam would be present at the Annual Meeting at Vail in July, so a presentation was postponed until then*).

2. Secretary's Report

2.1. The minutes of the previous meeting were circulated. Two mistakes were noted: Manhès was present as a guest, and there was an error in the spelling of Stevns Klint on page 3.

Motion: that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved (Anders, seconded by Chapman; carried unanimously).

Matters arising: none.

2.2. The Secretary received 84 valid ballot papers, plus a further 2 after the deadline. This total indicates that only *ca.* 10% of the membership voted, 86% of the votes coming from the US. There were, however, two complaints that the Newsletter containing the voting paper had arrived after the deadline. This was due to unforeseen problems in the distribution of *Meteoritics*, which resulted in the journal being circulated later than scheduled.

Action: an apology to the membership will be carried in the next issue of the Newsletter.

3. Treasurer's Report

The Secretary circulated a draft version of the Financial Statement. Anders requested final figures for the Copenhagen meeting - it is not known whether the meeting made a profit or a loss. Anders also questioned whether the statement should show the royalty payments from Pergamon, given that they are not really "income". The Financial Statement could be made more informative, if subscriptions were treated as "pass through" figures, rather than "income".

Action: Wänke to see Buchwald regarding a final statement of the Copenhagen meeting finances.

4. Society Meetings

4.1. 1993 - Vail (King): there had been 380 responses to the First Circular, and the Organising Committee (OC) calculated that between 180 and 200 papers would be presented. The Second Circular was in the mail, with details of accommodation (handled by the Westin Resort) and local transportation (handled by Colorado Mountain Express). The poster session will be on Tues. evening, with an additional one on

Monday, if there is sufficient demand. The OC has planned a half-day joint session with DPS, on "Extinct Radioactivities", and a special one-day registration fee will be available for participants in this session.

Provisional budgets for the meeting, based on high and low numbers of attendees were distributed to Council. The registration fee has been set at \$195, including the \$35 abstract fee. A sum of \$22 800 has been raised in sponsorship, of which \$12 000 will go towards student travel.

King had three questions to put to Council:

1. *What is Council's opinion on having three parallel sessions in the future?* Much discussion ensued. Council was generally against having three sessions, and favoured limiting the Plenary sessions and/or extending the poster sessions.
2. *How should requests for travel funding for potential attendees from Eastern countries be treated?* Again, much discussion ensued, but the unfortunately, the Society has no funds which can be utilised for this purpose. The President offered to write to UNESCO for travel funds.
3. *Does the Society have Liability insurance for the field trips?* No, it does not - participants will be asked to sign a disclaimer.

4.2. 1994 - Prague (Jakeš): organisation of the meeting is proceeding according to plan. The meeting will last from Monday 25th July to noon on Friday 29th July, with Wednesday afternoon free, and there will be two parallel sessions of talks. All the meeting rooms, accommodation and social events will be based in localities readily accessible from a single metro line. There will be two pre-meeting field trips, lasting 2-3 days: (i) impact structures in S. Bohemia; (ii) volcanics in N. Bohemia and a moldavite field in Saxony. A possible trip to the K-T boundary in the Carpathians has not yet been finalised.

Accommodation is being offered at a range of hotels, from *ca.* \$60 to *ca.* \$130. The Plenary session will be held in a suite of 14th century rooms, and it is hoped the banquet will be in Prague castle, but that is still under negotiation. The registration fee will be < \$195, and the first circular will be available at the Vail meeting.

4.3. 1995 - Washington D.C. (MacPherson): No progress to report

4.4. 1996 - Münster (Stöffler): No progress to report

5. Publications Committee Report

1992 was the first full year of the new contract with Pergamon, and there had been a meeting in October between Pergamon, the Publications Committee (PC), the Meteoritical Society (MS) and the Geochemical Society (GS), to discuss various issues, *e.g.* the quality of the paper in *GCA*. It was suggested that an award for "Best Paper" be established, but this was rejected in favour of an award for the "Best Associate Editor" (AE). The large number of Letters being received at *GCA* has overwhelmed Faure's ability to handle them himself, and he suggested appointing a separate Letters editor. Pergamon agreed to finance a separate Letters office, if necessary; a figure of \$20000 was mentioned. Subsequently, at the GS Director's meeting, the suggestion was made that this would be an opportunity to launch a new journal, devoted to Letters, and owned by the GS, not Pergamon. It was decided that a "Publications Advisory Committee" of the GS, not the PC, should consider this matter. This action eventually led to the resignation of Macdougall and Lipschutz, followed by the rest of the PC. Macdougall summarised the events which precipitated the resignations:

The GS Council had opted in 5/91 and again 10/91 for "delayed secession", *i.e.* to sign a final, 5-year *GCA*-contract with Pergamon but then to launch its own, competing journal in 1997. Some 96% of the GS membership had supported this decision, and on request of the GS Council, the PC submitted a detailed action plan last spring. Among other things, it recommended that an advisory committee be set up, separate from the PC, to shepherd the new journal into being. Although the GS appointed such a committee (mainly of people inexperienced in publication matters), this committee proceeded to consider not the original plan, but a casual suggestion by a GS Councillor: that the GS soon launch a new Letters journal. The working papers of the Committee showed little understanding of finances or of the problems in attracting manuscripts and library subscriptions, and little awareness of the PC's previous reports on these matters. As the GS had been generally disregarding the advice of the PC during the last 2 years, and now seemed to have placed virtually

all publication matters in the hands of the new committee, Macdougall and Lipschutz resigned as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, followed by the rest of the PC. The President of the GS, Lindsley, asked Macdougall to withdraw his resignation, but Macdougall refused. Lindsley then contacted Wänke, with a request that they appoint a new PC.

Much discussion by Council followed this report. Wänke reviewed our options: he could either meet with Lindsley and appoint a new PC, as requested, or we could refuse to accept the resignations and thus force the GS into negotiations. Given that only half the Council was present, and that several of the members had only just become aware of the situation, it was felt that it was not appropriate to take long-term decisions of such magnitude at this meeting. Wänke would, therefore, refuse to accept the resignation of the PC, and would contact the President of the GS and ask him also not to accept the resignations. Anders suggested that Council pass a formal motion of support for the President in this action.

Motion: Council supports the decision of President Wänke to delay acceptance of the resignation of the Publications Committee, and encourages the President to open discussions with the Geochemical Society in order to resolve the problems that led to the resignation (Anders, seconded by Grady; carried unanimously).

5.1. Meteoritics: Sears circulated his Editor's Report (attached), which showed that the journal was in a healthy state. He asked Council to accept the formation of a "Managerial Board" to market the journal to institutions. This was unanimously agreed by Council. Sears also wished for clarification from Council on an important editorial question: "What should *Meteoritics* policy be, if a medal-winner's manuscript was not of sufficient standard to publish in the journal?". Much discussion ensued, which encompassed part of Item 7. Council concluded that medal-winners should be requested to submit a manuscript to *Meteoritics*, with no guarantee of publication.

Sears described the new production methods recently put into practice at the *Meteoritics* office, which allowed acceptance of manuscripts on disks in almost any format. Any manuscript not on disk could be optically scanned. Authors would not be required to make substantial changes to the way in which they submitted manuscripts, but production costs will be reduced by *ca.* 33%.

Sears then described a manuscript by Ursula Marvin which had recently been submitted to *Meteoritics*, which documented the history of the Society. It had been intended to be included in the Abstracts volume, was too long to publish as a regular review article: costs would be in excess of \$6000. Anders expressed concern both about the high cost, in view of the \$29,000 deficit of *Meteoritics*, and about the difficulty of promoting *Meteoritics* to geology and astronomy libraries if we devote 1/6 of our annual page total to a parochial paper about our own Society. Council suggested that the paper be published as a special supplement to *Meteoritics*, possibly with a different coloured cover, and that the Barringer Crater Co. or the Institute of Meteoritics might be interested in sponsoring the project. Sears would discuss the matter at his next *Meteoritics* editorial board meeting. [*The Editorial Board has since upheld its original decision*].

5.2. Geochimica Cosmochimica Acta: Faure circulated his Editor's Report (attached), which showed that the journal was in a healthy state. He reported that submission of manuscripts on disk was just being introduced, but that only a very limited number of formats could be accepted at present. He was decreasing the number of Symposium Proceedings and other "Sets of Papers", as the journal seems to have reached a practical limit at 4800 pages. A few were still in the pipeline, but no new ones had been accepted. Anders noted that the manuscript "handling times" in the GCA report again were given as gross times between submission and final acceptance rather than as net times between submission and AE's report to the author, although the MS had been requesting the latter measure since at least 1989. The gross time is not a good measure of editorial efficiency, as it includes time for author's revisions and in some cases a second round of reviews. Had the net handling times improved from the median of 116 days, which had been criticised at the 1992 Council meeting? Faure replied that the data exist, but he felt that authors would be more interested in the gross times, which indicate how long after submission an average paper was accepted.

5.3. Finances: Lipschutz reported on the finances of *Meteoritics*, which made a loss of \$29 876 in 1992 (statement attached). Subscription rates must be raised in order to cover costs, especially if we increase to 6

issues per year. If such an expansion does occur, then institutional subscription rates could probably be raised substantially.

Much discussion followed the report, on ways in which the books could be balanced without imposing too severe an increase in dues on the membership. The following motion was carried, with reservations, and the actual increase in personal subscription rates will be discussed again at the next Council meeting.

Motion: That Institutional rates definitely be raised to \$210 and membership rates possibly be raised to \$60 per annum and student membership rates possibly be raised to \$35 per annum (Grady, seconded by Anders; motion carried unanimously).

6. Membership of Nominating Committee

The President presented his choice of Nominating Committee (attached), which would nominate a slate of Officers and Councillors for the next round of elections (held in 1994). S. R. Taylor had been on the previous Committee, and was included to ensure continuity.

Motion: That the President's suggested Nominating Committee be accepted (Anders, seconded by Chapman, motion carried unanimously).

7. Amendments to procedural guidelines for publicising Medal Awardees

Past President Anders circulated a paper updating and clarifying the guidelines, taking into account recent changes in the Bylaws. Much of the discussion had taken place during Item 5.1. It was generally felt that awardees should be invited to submit a manuscript to *Meteoritics*, without any guarantee of publication. Anders' paper was modified accordingly (attached).

Motion: That changes to the procedural guidelines for publicising medal awardees be adopted (Anders, seconded by Swindle; motion carried unanimously).

8. Any Other Business

No further business. Meeting closed at 7.00 p.m.

**Monica M. Grady
2nd August 1993**