

American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies  
General Membership Meeting  
8 October 2005, 7-8 pm  
Madison, Wisconsin

1. The meeting began with Secretary Alan Keenan announcing the results of the election for five elected positions on the Board of Directors (for terms of three years). The winners, in alphabetical order, were: Daniel Bass, Florida International University; Bambi Chapin, University of Chicago; Arjun Gunaratne, Macalester College; Jeffrey Samuels, Western Kentucky University; Deborah Winslow, NSF/University of New Hampshire. (They join Bradley Clough, whose term as an elected board member began in 2004.)
2. There followed a vote of thanks a) to the outgoing AISLS Board members: Arjun Gunaratne, Caitrin Lynch, Dennis McGilvray, Jon Walters, Susan Reed), b) to Deborah Winslow for her work as Membership Chair, and c) to Dennis McGilvray for his work as Member-at-Large of the Executive Committee.
3. The minutes from the 2004 meeting of the Board of Directors were approved.
4. Treasurer Caitrin Lynch then delivered and distributed the annual financial report, which was placed into the record. The report showed a healthy surplus of funds.
5. The Membership Report, compiled by Don Keller, showed a 12% (N=10) increase in individual memberships. The report was placed in the record.
6. John Rogers presented the Report on the CAORC-funded fellowships program. John announced that due to increased CAORC funding, the AISLS had been able to make five grants this year – whereas only three had been granted the previous year and two the year before. With the same funding for the 2006 competition, there should be about the same number of awards. John also announced that the AISLS had granted seven language awards this past year, six of which went to graduate students. John went on to discuss the existing AISLS program of travel awards for graduate students who are either members of AISLS or students at member institutions who give papers at Madison Conference. A motion was made and approved to increase the amount of the travel award to \$300. A further motion was made and approved to allow students to receive the award twice during their tenure as graduate students, and to receive an award for papers delivered on Sri Lankan-related panels either at conference itself or at the pre-conference meetings.
7. Jeanne Marecek then presented a shortened version of her President's Report. As part of this, she placed in the record the report from the Colombo office Executive Director, Ira Unaboowe and offered to email a copy to anyone who wants it. Jeanne discussed the important growth and improvements in the Colombo office, including: the hiring of the Ex. Dir. and an Assistant Director; the expansion of the number of computers to seven, soon to be outfitted with wireless connections; the frequent use of JSTOR by visitors; and the increase in the library's collection to 1500 volumes, with a functioning catalogue. Jeanne briefly discussed the Ford Foundation funded project, coordinated in Colombo by Cindy Caron, to support the research of Sri Lankan

graduate students and junior lecturers. There were 10 sponsored projects in 2005, an increase from the seven projects the previous year. Jeanne then turned to the US, where she reported on the hiring of two new part-time staff people: Don Keller, the administrative assistant responsible for mailings, scheduling, and maintaining membership and other records, and an accountant responsible for supplying information for auditing and tax purposes. Jeanne concluded her report by thanking the many people who assist in keeping AISLS a smooth-functioning organization: John Rogers for the many crucial roles he plays; Michele Gamburd for managing the listserv; the AISLS officers and staff people; and Cindy Caron for her work in Colombo.

#### 8. New Business:

a) Jeanne announced the decision to invite the University of Peradeniya's Walter Perera to attend the April 2006 Association for Asian Studies meetings in San Francisco and lead a discussion on the state of academic research and publishing in SL Universities.

b) Charlie Hallisey, who will be serving as the Conference Chair for the 2006 South Asia Studies Conference, led a discussion of the possibilities it offers for Sri Lanka events and panels. Given that next year is also the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AISLS, a decision had been made to give extra prominence to Sri Lankan themes and issues. Charlie invited the assembled members to consider proposals for panels on Sri Lankan topics -- including, for instance, panels that discuss the place of Sri Lankan studies within the larger field of South Asian studies -- or for special events (speakers, film, performances, etc.). Charlie also mentioned the potential for overlap and positive synergies between the SA Conference and the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs, whose annual meetings will be taking place on the same weekend, also in Madison. There followed a general discussion of how to make the most of these opportunities, which culminated in Arjun Gunaratne responding to Charlie's call and agreeing to be the "router" for any SL-related panels ideas/proposals.

The meeting closed with a brief discussion of possible ways to celebrate the AISLS 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

In attendance: Bambi Chapin, Mark Whitaker, Pat Lawrence, Timmo Gaasbeek, Dennis McGilvray, John Rogers, Nirmala Salgado, Steven Collins, Achala Rockwell, Ernest Rockwell, John Holt, Sree Padma Holt, James Brow, Arjun Gunaratne, Chandra R. de Silva, Sudath Gunasekera, Martha Chaiklin, Alan Keenan, Caitrin Lynch, Charles Hallisey, Jeanne Maracek.