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REPORT ON THE ANHS MEMBERS MEETING

MADISON, WI OCTOBER 2010

The 2010 Annual Members' Meeting of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies was held on October 15, 2010 in the Madison Concourse Hotel at 6:00 p.m., presided over by the Association's president, Geoff Childs. Eight members and 17 non-members attended.

INTRODUCTION

Newly Elected President Geoff Childs welcomed the audience and thanked them for attending. He also acknowledged and thanked outgoing President Mahendra Lawoti for 5 years of service during which ANHS has made great strides resolving long term problems and advancing into a bright future. Because several attendees were going to the [South Asia] Conference Dinner, Geoff said he would "front end" the most important issues on the agenda. These are to review the key successes of the last year and to discuss the important decisions ANHS must make in the near future.

RECENT SUCCESSES

ANHS has been moving in new directions this last year, instituting the following:

- a permanent office in Kathmandu to provide a base and support structure for our members and other scholars.
- a Senior Scholar Fellowship, for which we had five submissions, to two of which we awarded \$1500 each (Prof. Sarah Halvorson, Geography, University of Montana for "Community Vulnerability and Glacial Retreat" in Bhutan, and Dr. Birendra Raj Giri, The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK for "Bonded Labor Practices in Nepal").
- the first Dor Bahadur Bista graduate student paper award of \$100 to Tejendra Pherali (for "Leadership in Peril: Managing School and Self during Nepal's Peoples' War").
- applied for and was accepted into "developing" status as a member of the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC)

CAORC

Geoff Childs asked John Mock, who headed the effort to join CAORC, to explain this achievement. Mock explained that CAORC is a group of 24 American overseas research centers around the world. ANHS became a member in "developing" status in spring 2010, and today an ad hoc committee of himself, Geoff Childs, and Megan Adamson Sijapati met with CAORC Executive Director Mary Ellen Lane to discuss projects ANHS might initiate and what CAORC sees as the steps we need to take to attain full membership. ANHS

has already established an office in Kathmandu in association with our partner there, Social Science Baha. The office will help scholars with their research projects by providing work space, a library, help with negotiating the bureaucratic regulations, and securing housing during their stay in Nepal. ANHS has also begun a series of lectures and workshops in which visiting US scholars share their research findings with Nepalese scholars. Our hope is that CAORC will be a major support for our future activities. At today's meeting Dr. Lane agreed to support a conference ANHS will organize next year at our annual meeting, which will be at Macalester College in St. Paul. This will be a major event which will not only include scholars from North America, but will also bring scholars from the Himalayas to share their research. The conference will take place in conjunction with the 60th annual Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs (MCAA). The CAORC committee also discussed with Dr. Lane the possibility of bringing Himalayan scholars to the US in order to present lectures about their research at major research institutions in the US. John concluded that this is an exciting time for our organization, one that promises a strong and growing future role in Himalayan research.

2011 CONFERENCE

Geoff Childs then asked Arjun Guneratne to explain the current plans for next year's conference. Arjun explained that last year we had agreed to move our annual meeting to St. Paul (at Macalester) in 2011. The conference, which will occur on the last weekend of October, will have a number of invited papers, but our members and other scholars are greatly encouraged to create panels on their own topics. Arjun also suggested that we consider a range of formats, from traditional panels, to discussions of one or more books, to roundtables. He also noted that the program would be integrated with that of our partner, the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs.

HIMALAYA

Arjun said that the journal is close to catching up so the volume numbers would be published in the appropriate years. He hopes to continue the momentum so that the journal will have several years of issues and volumes in the pipeline. To accomplish this we need to have more papers submitted, so he asked us to please consider preparing the papers we are presenting here and/or other research for submission to *Himalaya*. He added that because he has streamlined the submission and review processes by administering them through the journal website, it is much easier to do the editing work and has even led to the journal getting submissions

from unexpected sources, like a recent one from Australia. There are several volumes in the works: Geoff Childs will be guest editing the next issue on Tibet, and it could expand to become an entire volume, if authors complete their revisions on time.

Barbara Brower asked if *Himalaya* could resume publishing issues separately rather than combining them into one volume. Arjun replied that publishing individual issues is the goal, but until we get the volumes caught up, he will continue to do volumes as one unit.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Geoff Childs then summarized the major accomplishments of the last year: the Senior Fellowships; the Dor Bahadur Bista prize, acceptance as a developing member of CAORC; establishing an office for researchers in Kathmandu; and beginning a lecture/workshop series for Nepalese scholars in Kathmandu;

Geoff then urged all those present to work to make their universities institutional members of ANHS. The cost is \$300 annually, and that can be a significant source of income for our organization. He found that his university, Washington University, was willing to join through its International and Area Studies Program. He noted that after Washington University became an institutional member of the Indian CAORC organization, the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS), students were able to obtain visas with AIIS' help. The Executive Council will be preparing a document that explains the benefits to universities that result from becoming institutional members of ANHS and will be sending it out to the membership. One example is that graduate students wishing to do research in Nepal will enjoy scholarly and practical help from our Kathmandu office.

Krishna Bhattachan commented that because ANHS works throughout the Himalayan region, it needs to network with more organizations than Social Science Baha. In Nepal he recommended organizations like Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies (CNAS) and Tribhuvan University. Geoff Childs noted that ANHS has a signed agreement in place with CNAS.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Interim Treasurer John Mock presented the Treasurer's Report. John announced that the organization's finances are strong. For the previous two years our bookkeeper, Kim O'Neil, has been providing quarterly budget reports and putting our previously scrambled finances in order. We now have approximately \$12,000 in the bank and perhaps \$10,000 worth of back issues of *Himalaya* and its predecessor,

the *Himalayan Research Bulletin*. Most of our funding comes from memberships, so members paying dues is the key to our resources and ability to accomplish our goals. Hence, we will be seeking to expand our paid memberships. If you are not now a member, please join.

David Holmberg then congratulated the officers for all that they have accomplished; he has been closely associated with the organization for decades, but ANHS seems to be achieving more than earlier leaders and members had ever thought possible.

Geoff noted that there are many people who have been involved with this process over several years, so thanks must go to all of them. John Mock reminded the group that we are seeking to expand our current committees and are seeking regular members who will join our work. He described the committees and asked for volunteers.

Kathryn March asked if it were possible to have membership fees paid by credit card on an annual schedule because she, and probably other members, are so busy that she has at times inadvertently neglected to pay her dues. Arjun replied that setting up these arrangements is too complicated and costly for small organizations like ours.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Geoff Childs explained that we need to amend ANHS' Constitution to facilitate delegating the editor's work and to make other improvements. He announced that the changes will be published in *Himalaya* and will be sent out to members with a ballot. Barbara Brower told the meeting that we first need to have the members at the annual meeting approve the changes before sending the ballots to the entire membership. Geoff Childs then read the parts of the constitution under review and the proposed amendments. After hearing the proposed changes, the members voted unanimously to proceed with a vote by the entire membership.

INTRODUCTIONS

With the major work of the meeting completed, those with tickets to attend the Conference Banquet left. The remaining members of the audience then did what we usually do at the beginning of the meeting: introduce ourselves and explain our work.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

John Metz
Secretary