

THE 33RD ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY convened this past May 26-28 at the University of Iowa, at the invitation of Gregory Landini. The University of Iowa spreads across several blocks of pleasantly wide streets with the Iowa River flowing through its center and several bridges connecting the two halves. The river and a narrow footbridge across it lie behind the Iowa House Hotel, where some of the Russell Society members stayed. Between the hotel and the bridge stands a beautiful, futuristic early building by the California architect Frank O. Gehry, the prosaically named Iowa Advanced Tech Lab (see cover). Going out the front door of the Iowa House and through the park in front of it and along the river beside it brought us to the English and Philosophy building, where the conference was held. The Old Capital Building, which is now part of the university, stands across the road from the park facing the river, and its gold dome, which rises above the campus, serves as a marker for the area as well as point at which the university and its life passes into that of the town. And the town does have a life. Iowa city is energetic and eclectic, with an indisputable college-town feel, a fabulous bookstore, and streets tightly packed with pubs, stores, open squares, street music, deadbeats and out-of-town gawkers – such as myself.

Though I arrived too late for it, the Russell Society's Friday evening dinner was at *The Cottage*, a restaurant in the middle of town (and hence in the middle of a small music festival) and the first of two BRS board meetings, which I also missed, was held there after dinner. Some of the business requires explanation. The Board needs to be able to vote on issues by email and postal mail between annual meetings, and prior to the meeting a committee had been appointed to propose bylaws allowing for this, but after discovering that laws for non-profits prohibit just this thing, the committee found itself at an impasse on this issue, but proposed bylaws concerning several other issues, which the Board approved. These included creating the position of Board Vice-President so Board meetings can run more smoothly when the Chair is absent, creating a membership category of life couple membership and rewriting the bylaws in gender-neutral language.

However, the real business of the annual meeting – which I did attend – began later that evening in the auditorium of the English

and Philosophy building, when Gregory Landini kicked off the talks with 'Solving the Russell Paradoxes' to an audience comprising regular BRS members as well as new faces, including two very advanced undergraduates. In his talk, Landini (University of Iowa) defended the controversial thesis that Russell's paradoxes of attributes and classes did not refute logicism (the view that arithmetic truth is logical truth), because, though not well known, Russell had in fact solved the paradoxes, and there is an available for the solution of them within Frege's early system as well. Thus Fregean and Russellian logicism is successful, Landini concluded, "relative to their respective ontologies".

On Saturday, Peter Stone (Stanford University) opened the morning session with 'Russell, Mathematics and the Popular Mind', addressing Russell's views on the value of a mathematical education and using those views to critique misperceptions of mathematics in such recent movies about mathematics as 'Good Will Hunting', 'A Beautiful Mind', 'Pi', and most recently, 'Proof'. Following Peter, Tim Madigan (St John Fisher College) spoke on 'Arthur James Balfour: The Anti-Russell', describing Balfour – who authored books on philosophy of religion and the paranormal and ran as Conservative Prime Minister of Great Britain from 1902-1905 and was Foreign Secretary in 1917 when he wrote the famous 'Balfour Declaration' – as Russell's "bête noir". Emilio Reyes Le Blanc (University of Toronto) then spoke on 'Russell on Acquaintance and *de re* belief' in which he developed a Russellian analysis of *de re* belief. Before breaking for lunch, Dorothea Lotter (University of Central Arkansas) spoke on 'Frege and Russell on the Justification of a Logical Theory', in which she gave a fascinating account of the differences in Frege's and Russell's views on logic that are suggested by Frege's assertion that arithmetic is a branch of logic and Russell's assertion that logic is a branch of mathematics.

Lunch was downtown, and for many meant a long table in an Indian restaurant, with quite delicious food served buffet style. After lunch, a second Board meeting was held to discuss the location of the next Annual Meeting, and the talks resumed at 2 pm with Matt McKeon (Michigan State University) reading a paper titled 'A Plea for Logical Objects'. McKeon looked at a problem first raised by John Etchemendy for the modern Tarskian semantic account of logical truth: that the Tarskian account cannot be correct because it

makes the extension of logical truth turn on the cardinality of the world, which is claimed to be a non-logical fact. McKeon appealed to Russell's early conception of logical objects to respond to this objection. Following his discussion, Christopher Pincock (Purdue University) spoke on 'The Scientific Basis for Russell's External World Program', arguing that in *Our Knowledge of the External World*, rather than attempting to reconcile physics with his views on acquaintance, Russell was trying to remove conflicts between the sciences of psychology and physics. After Pincock, Max Belaise (University of Martinique) spoke on 'Russell on Science and Religion', using Russell's essay *Religion and Science* as his point of departure to explore the relation between science and religion. In 'On Denoting with Denoting Concepts' Francesco Orilia (Università di Macerata), the final speaker of the afternoon, defended Russell's 'On Denoting' approach to semantics and ontology against neo-Meinongian objections.

The Society met for dinner on the second floor of a local bistro – the *One Twenty Six* – filling it to the bursting point with people and conversation. It is the first time in my memory that the society ate dinner in public, but this detail seemed to have little impact on its members' pleasure in good food and company. After dinner, the party trooped back to campus to enjoy a presentation by David Blitz (Central Connecticut State University) on 'Bertrand Russell Audio-Visual Project: the Andrew Wyatt Interviews'. In his presentation, David showed recent digitalizations of old television interviews of Russell by Andrew Wyatt.

On Sunday, Chad Trainer (Independent Scholar) gave a talk called 'In *Further Praise of Idleness*', in which he argued that Russell, who insisted that "there is far too much work done in the world, [and] that immense harm is caused by the belief that work is virtuous" in his 1935 book *In Praise of Idleness*, if he were alive today, would have even greater cause for concern about our current lack of idleness than he did for the lack of idleness in the world of 1935. After Chad's talk, Allan Hillman (Purdue University) discussed 'Russell on Leibniz and Substance'. Concluding the weekend came a master class hosted by Alan Schwerin (Monmouth University) on 'Russell, Hume and the Idea of Self'. – RC

MEETING MINUTES, BRS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MAY 26 AND 27, 2006

The Friday, May 26, 2006 Board of Directors meeting of the BRS began at 7 pm at The Cottage in Iowa City. BRS President Alan Schwerin officiated.

Attending were Alan Schwerin, Chad Trainer, Cara Rice, David White, Tim Madigan, Phil Ebersole, Peter Stone, David Blitz, Gregory Landini, Warren Allen Smith, John Ongley, Rosalind Carey and David Henehan.

Minutes from the 2005 Board of Directors meeting were approved. The Treasurer's Report was approved. Reports from the various committees, especially the Bylaw Review Committee, vice-presidents and the *Quarterly's* editors were heard.

The Bylaw Review Committee introduced their proposed revisions to the BRS Bylaws and the remainder of the meeting was spent discussing and voting on these revisions to the bylaws. The committee had been established to devise a system for the board to vote on issues by email and postal mail between annual meetings, but did not address the issue since they had discovered that Illinois Not-for-Profit Corporation Law requires unanimous written consent for an action to be valid, which would be virtually impossible with a 24 member board. (The BRS is incorporated in Illinois.) The proposed amendments to the bylaws were all approved. Revisions adopted included the use of gender-neutral language in the bylaws and provisions for conducting Board meeting when the Chair is absent.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

THE SATURDAY, MAY 27, 2006 CONTINUATION of the BRS Board of directors meeting began at 1 pm at the English-Philosophy building on the University of Iowa main campus, where the annual meeting took place, in Iowa City. BRS President Alan Schwerin officiated.

Attending were Alan Schwerin, Chad Trainer, Cara Rice, David Goldman, Thom Weidlich, David White, Tim Madigan, Peter Stone, David Blitz, Gregory Landini, Warren Allen Smith, John Ongley, Rosalind Carey and David Henehan.

Business of the meeting included: election of officers, choice of a site for the 2007 annual meeting, a discussion of whether the Society's bank balance, or a significant part of it, should be invested in a reasonably secure but interest-earning account (this was Ken Blackwell's suggestion), whether a Nominating Committee for Board positions should be created (Peter Stone, Ken Blackwell, and Dave White's suggestion), whether a statement to Iran (Dennis Darland) should be adopted and whether the BRS position on the U.S. invasion of Iraq should be reaffirmed (Ray Perkins' suggestion). due to lack of time, the last four issues were not voted on.

The following officers were duly nominated, seconded and unanimously elected for the 2006-2007 year: President: Alan Schwerin; Vice-President: Ray Perkins, Jr.; Secretary: David Henehan; Treasurer: Dennis Darland; Chair: Chad Trainer; Vice-Chair: David White.

For the site of the 2007 annual meeting, it was decided that it would be either hosted by David White in Rochester or by Alan Schwerin at Monmouth University with the other person hosting the meeting for 2008. David and Alan were to decide between themselves which of them would host the meeting first. (They later decided that it would be Alan who hosted it at Monmouth in 2007 with David hosting it in Rochester in 2008.)

The meeting adjourned at 2 pm.

David Henehan, Secretary, BRS

BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY, INC.
2006 ANNUAL TREASURER'S REPORT
Cash Flow January 1, 2006 – December 31, 2006

BALANCE 1/1/06	12,139.56
INCOME	
Contributions	
BRS	760.00
TOTAL Contributions	760.00
Dues	
New Members	563.00
Renewals	6808.54
TOTAL Dues	7371.54
Library Income	69.00
Other Income	6.00
TOTAL INCOME	8206.54
EXPENSES	
Bank Charges	32.93
BRS Paper Award	425.90
Library Expenses	276.90
Meeting Expenses	64.69
BRS <i>Quarterly</i>	2444.08*
Other Expenses	112.23
PayPal Fees	88.85
<i>Russell</i> Subscriptions	3444.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	6889.58
TRANSFERS	
FROM PayPal	2441.50
FROM Deposit Intra	5780.00
TO Checking	- 8221.50
TOTAL TRANSFERS	0.00
OVERALL TOTAL	1316.96
 BALANCE 12/31/06	 13,456.52

* Some *Quarterly* expenses were not turned in by the end of the year.

Dennis J. Darland, BRS Treasurer
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