

# XITH IAMS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, PORT DICKSON, MALAYSIA, 2004

## Treasury's Report

During the last four years, since our meeting in South Africa, the finances of IAMS have remained in a healthy position. As has been our custom, we have continued to support the annual expenses of the Association out of the membership fees and the surplus that accrued from the last conference. Our main expenses have been the publication of the Journal, *Mission Studies*, the meetings of the Executive Committee and grants to the various official IAMS study groups.

At its first meeting, the outgoing Executive Committee decided to spend extra money on upgrading and reorganising the electronic resources for the administration of IAMS, including its data base and web-site. It also put in motion a new means of payment by credit card through the organisation, *World Pay*. Some fifty percent of the membership has availed itself of this method; it has undoubtedly been a great help in making payment easier for many people. Since the beginning of this year, an agreement with the Dutch publisher, Brill, for the publication and distribution of the journal has meant a different arrangement for the payment of membership fees. From this time onwards Brill will be handling the collection and processing of the fees, reimbursing IAMS with a part of the subscription paid for the journal. This means that IAMS is no longer responsible for the payment of the editorial work, the printing and mailing of its journal. It also means that Brill will, along with the Secretariat and Treasury, maintain up to date records of current members. Such an agreement relieves both the Secretariat and Treasury of considerable rather tedious administrative work. The Executive believes that this deal has great advantages for our Association, not only in administration and finance, but also in the wider availability of the journal, and the subsequently higher profile that IAMS will receive.

During the last four years, the Executive has authorised an additional grant of money from its budget to the PADOH Conference, held in Rome in 2002. This Conference, expertly facilitated by Dr. John Roxburgh, was well supported by both IAMS members and allied organisations and institutions. It is the latest gathering of people with a special concern for the recording of mission histories and continues an interest which has always been at the heart of IAMS.

The IAMS financial year coincides with the calendar year. As the Executive has adopted the custom of meeting towards the end of January each year, it has been able to review and approve the statement of accounts, professionally audited, for the previous year, and fix a budget for the year in progress. Thus, income and expenditure has been carefully monitored. Although, IAMS finances are always a little precarious, in that there is no guaranteed long-term source of funding, a prudent use of the money bequeathed to us has meant that the balance is still in a healthy state. It is important that it should remain so, as far as possible, because IAMS may not always be able to rely on the generosity of some of its main benefactors, particularly in absorbing some of the costs of the Secretariat into the future. (If any IAMS member wishes to examine the accounts as they stood at the end of the last financial year, she or he is welcome to do so).

Finally, now that I shall be handing over the job of Treasurer, with the approval of the IAMS Assembly, to an ex-colleague in Birmingham, Dr. Allan Anderson, I would like to take this opportunity to say a special thanks to three people, without whom, the Treasuryship, over the last four years, would no doubt have descended into confusion and chaos: first, Birger Nygaard, who has done much invaluable work himself in such areas as setting up the arrangements for electronic payment, providing a preliminary budget for this Conference, liaising over membership lists and, generally, alerting the Treasury to tasks that need to be done. His expertise and patience has been enormously appreciated. Secondly, Stefka Ritchie, whom many of you will remember from South Africa. She was the administrator for the Treasury for a number of years, but stepped down, once all the accounts for the last Conference had been cleared. She was most willing and efficient in all the tasks she undertook; a real delight to work with. Thirdly, the present administrator, Briony Seymour, who has been a tower of strength over the last three years, especially when we became geographically separated on my retirement from Birmingham in 2002. Indeed, I can safely say that, de facto, Briony has been the mainstay of the Treasury, and I have had to do little more than keep a watching brief. Briony is highly competent, completely reliable and quite unperturbed, even during the, wholly infrequent, difficulties that can occur. It has been an honour and privilege to work with them and to have had the wonderful opportunity of serving IAMS over the last few years. I shall greatly miss the annual gatherings of the Executive.

J. Andrew Kirk,  
Port Dickson, Malaysia,  
3 August 2004