

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

*Shef Rogers, SHARP President*



Welcome to the 2023 AGM. I hope that we'll be holding more AGMs in person in future, but the ability to include members whether or not they have been able to attend the Annual Conference will also mean that we will likely retain a hybrid structure even when some of us are able to gather in person.

As always, I'd particularly like to acknowledge those of you for whom this is your first SHARP AGM. To help with the AGM's proceedings and to provide you with a copy of the agenda, we produce this annual report to summarise the Society's activities over the past year. We hope this will help you identify the various officers of the Society, and if you are interested in more information about anything we do, any member of the EC will be happy to answer your questions; just email them at the address that follows each report.

## **THE SOCIETY'S STRUCTURE & CONSTITUTION**

SHARP is governed by an Executive Council of elected officers, a Board of Directors (chaired by Matt Kirschenbaum for the past two years), and a Nominating Committee (led by Sydney Shep for the first time this year; a baptism by fire, really, given all the positions requiring nominations). SHARP's activities are made possible through the further efforts of numerous appointees (most obviously the editors of *Book History*, *SHARP News*, *Lingua Franca*, but also the various review editors, the moderators of SHARP-L, the Book History Book Prize judges, and the archivist), as well as, of course, the membership as a whole. As always, we are very grateful to all those members who volunteer their time to support the Society. A wide range of members contribute in some specific volunteer role to enable SHARP to carry out its activities. If you would like to be more involved in SHARP, please contact any of the EC officers. One of SHARP's strengths is its collegiality, but that also rests upon generous service by many members.

Finally, I would like to thank our two hard-working consultants: Executive Assistant, Ellen Barth, for her significant attention to the website, her assistance with the Book History Book Prize process, and the many other research tasks she undertakes to help the EC make informed decisions, and Anna Muenchrath, our Communications Coordinator, who has been very involved in the redesign of our website, and contributed extensively to communications leading up to and during this year's conference.

## **PRESIDENT & VICE-PRESIDENT**

As of this meeting, Shef Rogers and Will Slauter have both completed their second terms. Will has been very active representing SHARP in the American Council of Learned Societies, from whom we gain a great deal of information and the opportunity to join other scholarly societies in shared initiatives.

Shef has focused most this year on convening the Annual Conference in the absence of a local host for an in-person event. Elections are also a major event for the EC and President and I would like to thank the Nominating Committee for all their time and efforts in soliciting an impressive list of nominees. Thanks also to all who voted: SHARP is a proudly democratic organization and member participation really matters. The highlight of the year so far has to be the revision and unveiling of the revamped SHARPweb. I look forward to seeing how the new subcommittee on conferences progresses and what the new EC determines about the

possibility of an executive director for the Society. We always welcome feedback, so please do not hesitate to contact any EC member with ideas, questions or concerns.

*president@sharpweb.org & vp@sharpweb.org*

## **FINANCES**

Treasurer Colin Ramsey reports that SHARP continues to enjoy a solid financial position. Current balances across all accounts as of this AGM report amount to \$461,615.00. While SHARP's primary bank is one of the largest in the US and thus is unlikely to fail, recent news about the failures of some medium-sized banks in the US, a result of those banks' exposure to risks associated with rising interest rates, underscores the prudence of SHARP moving some of its deposits to another large bank, in order to ensure that all the organization's funds remain below the current Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's maximum limit for deposit insurance of \$250,000. The treasurer and the EC are currently taking steps to do so.

SHARP's total expenses for its fiscal (and calendar) year of 2022 were modestly less than budgeted, though that result was in part a function of delays in receiving invoicing for SHARP's Director of Communications position. Expenses for 2023 are currently tracking within the 2023 budget.

Colin will remain as Treasurer for 2023–2025.

*treasurer@sharpweb.org*

## **MEMBERSHIP and SOCIETY AND REGIONAL LIAISONS**

It may seem clichéd to say, but it is a fact: SHARP cannot do what it does without our members. Thank you for making the choice to join us. This annual report is full of the activities we can sustain because our members fund us: the annual conference; our publications, including [Book History](#), [Lingua Franca](#), and [SHARP News](#); our communication platforms and technologies, such as the SHARP-L listserv, the [website](#), and the searchable membership directory; several [prizes, awards and fellowships](#), including [ECR Lightning Seed Grants](#), [BIPOC Scholar Research Development Grants](#), and conference travel assistance; and most recently, hiring a part-time Communications Coordinator to bring information about all of this to you.

Members at every level contribute to these undertakings, but we are able to keep our dues low thanks to the generosity of our donors. A full 38% of our members receive free or discounted membership. Those who donate receive a receipt that includes the portion of the Sustaining or Patron membership levels that qualifies as a donation. SHARP is a registered nonprofit in the United States (a 501(c)(3) organization), so donations may be eligible for a tax deduction.

2023 Patron Members are Leslie Howsam and Lisa Maruca, and our Sustaining Members are Suzan Alteri, Dee E. Andrews, Ann Blair, Jennifer Blair, Elizabeth Canning, Sondra Miley Cooney, Chris W. Cullnane, Marija Dalbello, Joan M. Friedman, Danielle Fuller, Mary Fuller, Ian Gadd, Alan Galey, Barbara Hochman, Elizabeth F. M. Hoiem, Noreen Humble, Tamara L. Hunt, Wallace Kirsop, Beth Lander, Matthew J. Lavin, Marianne Martens, Douglas P. McElrath, Elizabeth McHenry, Margaret F. Nichols, David Nord, Robert Patten, Joshua Reid, Simon P. Rogers, Theresa Saliba, Sydney J. Shep, Michael F. Suarez, Larry E. Sullivan, Whitney Trettien, Michelle Warren, and Sarah Werner. There are also many other donors who made contributions outside of membership levels: Georgia B Barnhill, Janika Bischof, Nick P. Canty, Kathleen M. Comerford, John Culver, Beth Rigel Daugherty, Kevin P. Delinger, Paul Eggert, Barbara Williams Ellertson, Carole Gerson, Barbara Hochman, Lanora Jennings, Anne D. Kahn, Rachel Leket-Mor, Kenneth C. Mann, Marianne Martens, Simone

Murray, Christine Pawley, Alan Rauch, Karis Shearer, Scott Slawinski, Robert E. Walls, and Germaine Warkentin. Thank you all for your generosity!

*members@sharpweb.org*

## CONFERENCES

Alison Newman has been busy this year negotiating with potential organisers for future conferences and reviewing our conference manual and procedures to achieve seamless coordination between the Society and the local organising committees. She has assisted the Dunedin organisers and worked with other institutions to formalise plans for conferences in 2024 and beyond. In addition, she is working with several other members of the EC to initiate a series of events outside the annual conference using the Society's licence for Zoom Events, so keep an eye out for news on those from July.

Alison is continuing in her role as Director of Conferences and will be a central participant in the joint Board–EC subcommittee that will begin its work to review current and improve future SHARP conferencing procedures and policies.

*conferences@sharpweb.org*

## TRANSNATIONAL AFFAIRS

2022–23 has been a relatively quiet year for Transnational Affairs. SHARP endorsed the significant September conference on Francysk Skaryna and Renaissance Book Culture, but has otherwise received relatively few requests from events, so please keep in mind the ability to have SHARP as a named partner if doing so will help persuade other funders to support you.

This position was not filled in the elections and the new EC will determine whether to retain it or use it the former Member-at-Large position in other ways in relation to future developments. Please feel free to discuss possible directions with any member of the EC.

*transnational@sharpweb.org*

## PUBLICATIONS

In 2022, the journal *Book History* (eds. Greg Barnhisel, Yuri Cowan & Beth le Roux) celebrated its 25th year, and issue 26.1 (Spring 2023) was recently published. We will soon be advertising for a new editor to join the *Book History* team - keep your eyes peeled for more information. *SHARP News* (ed. Andie Silva, with a team of other contributors and editors) is fully open access and continues to explore new ways to engage with our membership and the book history community. *Lingua Franca*'s new editorial team (eds. Cynthia Gabbay, Mariana de Moreas Silveira & Susan Pickford) put out issue 8 in late 2022 with support from guest editor Anne O. Fisher. As Director of Publications, I would like to express my deep gratitude to all the editors of SHARP's publications, as well as to JHUP for their involvement in publishing and distributing *Book History* to our membership and well beyond! Alongside our wonderful editors, I would like to take this opportunity to thank anyone who has recently written, translated or reviewed for and proofed, copyedited or typeset SHARP's publications: we appreciate the complex and different types of (often volunteer) labor that go into our three publications. On a more personal note, I am one of the numerous officers stepping down at the end of June 2023. I am deeply grateful for the experiences gained and connections made through SHARP, and I hope to serve our scholarly community in other ways in the future. Matthew Day (University of Derby, UK) is incoming as

Director of Publications; please do not hesitate to contact him at the email address below with ideas and feedback.

*publications@sharpweb.org*

## **AWARDS**

Melanie Ramdarshan Bold oversees the SHARP Book History Book Prize and the *Book History* editors' prize for the best essay submitted to the journal by a graduate student: these will both be awarded at the AGM on Thursday 29th June. Melanie extends her sincere thanks to the judges of the book prize - Kinohi Nishikawa, Susan Pickford, Jennifer Richards, and Daniel Bellingradt - and to Ellen Barth (the SHARP Executive Assistant).

This year saw the fifth award of the SHARP 25th Anniversary Fellowship to Dr Sarah Pyke (currently MHRA Postdoctoral Research Associate at Anglia Ruskin University). This fellowship will support Sarah's research on 'Operation Tiger', the early 1980s raids by HM Customs and Excise on Gay's the Word bookshop. The fellowship will facilitate the creation of a new collection of oral histories relating to 'Operation Tiger'. Sarah will speak to those in the bookselling and publishing industries who were directly affected by or involved in the customs raids, the campaign, and other associated acts of censorship in the 1980s and 1990s.

In 2023 we also awarded the third round of research development grants for BIPOC scholars. The recipients were: Cora Anthony (University of Illinois, Urbana- Champaign); Herdiana Hakim (Sampoerna University); Sonali Kulkarni (Tilburg University); Dominique Polanco (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)); and Jeania Ree V. Moore (Yale University).

Melanie is stepping down as an officer in June 2023. She would like to extend her thanks to her fellow EC officers and the wider SHARP community - with a special thanks to those who have volunteered to be on various judging panels - for making it such a fun and gratifying experience.

Please contact Edmund King (Open University), the new Director of Awards, with any queries.

*awards@sharpweb.org*

## **ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

As Director of Electronic Resources, Sarah Werner has overseen two major projects this past year. Spring 2023 saw the long-awaited relaunch of SHARP's main website. The site has been completely overhauled, with a simplified information structure and accessible language making it easier for users to find the information they're looking for and to learn more about who we are by browsing our site. As a follow-up to this overhaul, next year we will turn our attention to replacing the old site's "book history resources" section with a more easily navigable and updatable website. If you are interested in serving on a committee guiding this work, please contact Dr. Werner.

Internally, SHARP has also made some big changes to our electronic infrastructure. Thanks to our nonprofit status, we have been able to switch for free to Google Workspace, giving us access to a more robust email and file management system. SHARP members probably won't notice a difference in their engagement with the organization, but behind the scenes, this change will make our records management and officer turn-overs much easier.

Sarah is continuing as Director of Electronic Resources for 2023–2025.

*electronic.resources@sharpweb.org*

## **ARCHIVES AND RECORD-KEEPING**

Vincent Trott has scheduled and minuted EC and Board meetings throughout the year and has generally kept the organization functioning smoothly. He has also worked to ensure that the society's records are archived and organized effectively. He is currently updating and finalising SHARP's Policy Manual – this document has existed in draft form for some time and has evolved significantly alongside SHARP's governance and procedures since 2019. The completed manual will be handed over to the new Executive Council after this year's annual conference. With Ian Gadd, Vincent has also managed and overseen the moderation of the society's listserv, SHARP-L, throughout the year.

Vincent is stepping down as an officer this year, following nearly eight years working with the EC, first as Executive Assistant and then as Recording Secretary. He would like to thank all the officers and members he has worked with for making this such an enjoyable and enriching experience. He will continue to manage SHARP-L after stepping down from the EC.

*secretary@sharpweb.org*

## **SHARP BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNUAL REPORT 2022–2023**

Matthew Kirschenbaum (Chair, Board of Directors, 2021–2023)

The Board met on November 14, 2022. Agenda items included a report from Shef Rogers, SHARP President, followed by questions and discussion. At the same meeting the Board voted unanimously to approve the 2023 SHARP budget. The Board discussed upcoming vacancies throughout the organization's administration, and was asked to forward recommendations to the Nominating Committee. There was also discussion of possible strategies for increasing involvement in governance activities by the membership at large. Various other business was transacted asynchronously over the course of the year, and Kirschenbaum has remained in regular contact with the President to liaise between the Board and EC.

## **Zoom Link for AGM**

Topic: SHARP AGM

Time: Jun 30, 2023 08:30 AM Auckland, Wellington

Join from PC, Mac, iOS or Android:

<https://otago.zoom.us/j/92060270073?pwd=SGE0ZFAvZlFEbTdLYzM1bmxPM2VVZz09>

Meeting ID: 920 6027 0073

Password: 569394

## AGM Agenda

- Welcome & brief remarks on officers' reports *Shef Rogers*
- Welcome to the new Executive Council and Board Members
- Acknowledgment of those completing terms on EC and Board
- Announcement of SHARP Prizes
  - o SHARP Book History Book Prize  
*Melanie Ramdarshan Bold*
  - o Greenspan-Rose Essay Prize  
*Beth Le Roux, on behalf of all 3 editors*
- SHARP plans for 2024 Conference
- Members' announcements
- Pre-recorded presentation from the *SHARP News* team *Leah Henrickson*
- Any other business