

# RENAISSANCE NEWS

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY  
THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

---

Volume XII

Summer 1959

Number 2

---

## PART II

### *Constitution and Bylaws*

OF THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA

#### ARTICLE I. Name.

The name of this Society shall be THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA. The Society shall be a corporation.

#### ARTICLE II. Purpose.

##### *Section 1.*

The purpose of this Society shall be the advancement of learning in the field of Renaissance studies, and especially the promotion of interchanges among the various fields of specialization, such as art, architecture, bibliography and the book arts, the classical and modern literatures, history, music, medicine, law, philosophy, religion and theology, the sciences, and any other fields of learning which can deepen or broaden understanding of the Renaissance period.

##### *Section 2.*

It shall be the purpose of the Society to effect this advancement of learning and these interchanges between the disciplines by sponsoring or initiating suitable projects, both of research and of bibliography; and by publication; and by assisting and encouraging discussion groups, especially

local and regional groups; and, where possible, by helping to arrange exchanges of speakers between these groups.

##### *Section 3.*

The promotion of interchanges shall not be limited to the United States of America, but shall be extended to include cooperation with individuals and groups abroad, both to increase the effectiveness of American scholarship and to promote understanding through development of common interests. The Society purposes, where convenient, to affiliate with foreign groups and societies.

#### ARTICLE III. Membership.

##### *Section 1.*

The Society shall consist of those who have paid current dues to the Treasurer of the Society. These shall be considered full members with voting privileges, whether they are regular, sustaining, patron, or benefactor members. Provision for non-dues-paying members (Honorary, Corresponding, and Student members) may be made in the Bylaws, but they shall not be voting members.

Section 2.

FOUNDERS. Those members who signified their intention of joining the Society, and paid their dues, before March 1, 1954, shall be known as FOUNDERS.

Section 3.

CHARTER MEMBERS. Those members who joined the Society within the first calendar year, i.e., before January 1, 1955, or who paid dues from the first year, shall be known as CHARTER MEMBERS.

Section 4.

No special rights or privileges shall derive from the status or designation of FOUNDER, or that of CHARTER MEMBER.

Section 5.

Each member of the Society entitled to vote shall also be entitled to receive one annual subscription to any regular periodical publication issued by the Society. Occasional and special publications which may be issued from time to time will be distributed as the Executive Board determines.

ARTICLE IV. Organization.

Section 1.

The governing body of the Society shall be an Executive Board assisted by an Advisory Council.

Section 2.

The Executive Board shall consist of the President, the Executive Secretary, the Treasurer, such *ex officio* members as the Board elects, and the Chairmen of five standing committees, as follows:

1. Committee on Constitution and Bylaws
2. Committee on Membership and Regional Conferences
3. Finance Committee
4. Committee on New Projects and Activities
5. Committee on International Cooperation

Section 3.

The members of the Executive Board shall be elected by the Advisory Council at the annual meeting preceding the ex-

piration of each term and shall remain in office until their successors have been elected and have taken office. There shall be a nominating committee of three, elected by the Advisory Council. Two members of the nominating committee shall be nominated from the floor, and one shall be nominated by the Executive Board, except as provided in the By-laws. Again with this exception, the nominating committee shall be elected one year in advance of its functioning, and its nominations shall be notified to the members of the Advisory Council at least six weeks in advance of the annual meeting.

Section 4.

The President shall be elected for two years and shall not succeed himself. Upon expiration of his term, he shall become a member of the Advisory Council for life, *ex officio*.

Section 5.

The Executive Secretary shall be elected for three years, but may be re-elected.

Section 6.

The Treasurer shall be elected for three years, but may be re-elected.

Section 7.

The Chairmen of the five standing committees shall be elected for three years, but may be re-elected.

Section 8.

The Advisory Council shall meet at least once a year and shall consist of two representatives from each regional group or conference and one from each local group; an equal number of members-at-large chosen to represent as many as possible of the specializations, or disciplines, represented by the membership of the Society; and former officers.

Section 9.

The regional or local groups or conferences shall choose their own representatives and fix terms of office.

Section 10.

The members-at-large shall be nominated by the Executive Board and elected

for two years by mail vote of the individual members of the Society. The Executive Board shall nominate, by disciplines, at least twice as many candidates as are to be elected. Members-at-large may be re-elected.

*Section 11.*

Members of the Advisory Council may be represented at annual meetings by substitutes with voting power.

*Section 12.*

Members of the Executive Board are *ex officio* members of the Advisory Council, and they shall continue to be members of the Advisory Council for two years after they cease to be members of the Executive Board.

*Section 13.*

Three trustees, who shall administer the endowment and permanent funds of the Society, shall be elected by the Executive Board for three years, except as provided in the Bylaws. Trustees may be re-elected.

ARTICLE V. Duties of the Officers.

*Section 1.*

The President of the Society shall be *ex officio* Chairman of the Advisory Council and of the Executive Board. The Executive Secretary shall serve as Secretary of both the Council and the Board.

*Section 2.*

The President of the Society shall call meetings of the Executive Board, and of the Advisory Council, and of the Society as a whole, or shall authorize the Secretary to do so.

*Section 3.*

The Executive Board shall prepare the agenda for meetings of the Advisory Council.

*Section 4.*

In the absence of the President, the Executive Secretary shall preside at Council and Board meetings.

*Section 5.*

The Executive Board shall be responsible for the general policies of the Society, and shall report on those policies to the

membership of the Society through the Advisory Council, and, where desirable, through the *Renaissance News* or other publication of the Society.

*Section 6.*

The Executive Board shall be responsible for the general policies of the Society between meetings and shall report its activities to the Advisory Council at the annual meeting of the Advisory Council.

*Section 7.*

The Executive Board shall have authority to undertake projects in the name of the Society and to act for the Society in establishing relationships with other societies or institutions when such relationships fall within the avowed purposes of the Society.

*Section 8.*

The Executive Board shall control disbursements and shall order an annual audit of the Treasurer's accounts.

*Section 9.*

The Executive Board shall not have power to incur a debt in excess of the current resources of the Society, nor shall it have the power to commit any future resources of the Society, except in so far as contracts for the publication of a newsletter or journal shall constitute such a forward commitment.

*Section 10.*

The Executive Secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the Council or arrange for keeping them, and all decisions of the Executive Board shall be recorded and the record distributed to all members of the Executive Board within two weeks after the meeting.

*Section 11.*

The Executive Secretary shall keep, in duplicate, a record of all actions taken by the Executive Board, and of all recommendations and proposals received from the Advisory Council, and these records shall be available for consultation by any member of the Society at the headquarters of the Society. One set shall not be taken out of the headquarters office. Both

sets must be turned over, intact, by the retiring Secretary to his successor, and must be preserved by each and every succeeding Secretary.

*Section 12.*

The Treasurer shall keep the accounts of the Society, collect the annual dues, and perform the usual duties of a Treasurer, subject to the direction of the Executive Board. The Treasurer shall keep an account of all receipts and expenditures, and shall turn over all such accounts to his successor.

*Section 13.*

All money received by the Treasurer for the Society shall be deposited in the name of the Society in a convenient bank, and all checks written by the Treasurer on the account of the Society must be countersigned by either the President or the Executive Secretary. In the temporary absence of both of these officers, a duly elected Chairman of one of the standing committees may be designated by the Board to countersign.

*Section 14.*

Duties of the Chairmen of the five standing committees.

1. *Committee on Constitution and By-laws:* The Chairman of this committee shall choose not less than two nor more than four others to work with him in the formulation of a permanent Constitution and Bylaws for the Society. After the adoption of such a Constitution this committee shall be responsible for the formulation of amendments and Bylaws, and shall serve the Executive Board as a consulting body with regard to the constitutional affairs of any society or group in the formation of which our Society may take part or of which it may become a member.

2. *Committee on Membership and Regional Conferences:* The Chairman of this committee shall choose one member of his committee from each regional group represented on the Advisory Council. He may add other members up to a total of

not more than double the number of groups represented. The function of this committee is to increase the membership of the Society and to promote the interests of the groups, exchanges of speakers, materials for programs, and so forth, among them.

3. *Finance Committee:* The Chairman of this committee shall represent the Society in all dealings with individuals or foundations, for the purpose of securing funds for the projects and activities of the Society, including capital funds. The number of members to serve on this committee shall be at the discretion of the Executive Board.

4. *Committee on New Projects and Activities:* The Chairman of this committee shall investigate and evaluate all projects and activities proposed to the Society for adoption, and shall present the findings of his committee to the Executive Board for final action. He shall be empowered to appoint to his committee such members of the Society, and especially of the Advisory Council, as he considers best able and willing to advise him. His committee shall consist of not less than five nor more than twelve members. This committee shall be discharged at the time of the final disposal of the project for which it was chosen (whether adopted or rejected by the Executive Board). The Chairman shall be empowered to form a new committee for each undertaking.

The reports of this committee shall be confidential, if the Chairman so advises, and the report in the minutes of the Executive Board shall be subject to his censorship.

Reports of this committee, tabled by the Executive Board, may be taken up again on the motion of any member of the Executive Board.

The Executive Board may appoint a special committee to carry out any project recommended to it by the Committee on New Projects and Activities and adopted by it, and the Chairman of such a spe-

cial committee shall be a member of the Board *ex officio*. The number of members to serve on this committee shall be at the discretion of the Executive Board.

5. *Committee on International Cooperation*: The Chairman of this committee shall be empowered to select others to serve with him, provided he does not appoint more than twelve.

He shall be empowered to propose corresponding members abroad who are not members of the Society; and to recommend honorary members among distinguished foreigners. He shall work with the membership chairman to secure members abroad. He shall negotiate affiliations with foreign groups and societies; and shall investigate the possibility of an international society, under UNESCO or otherwise, of which our Society would be a member.

He is not empowered to commit the Society without consulting the Executive Board. Decisions affecting major policies of the Society shall be submitted to the Advisory Council.

6. The slates of the Committees' Chairmen shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

*Section 15.*

The Chairmen of Committees, as officers of the Executive Board, shall attend meetings of the Board and coordinate their activities through the Board and in cooperation with other officers of the Board.

*Section 16.*

Each Chairman shall submit an annual report to the Executive Board for incorporation in the minutes.

ARTICLE VI. Publications.

*Section 1.*

The Executive Board shall constitute a Committee on Publications with final responsibility for all publications issued in the name of the Society.

*Section 2.*

No part of the Society (section, conference, group, or individual) shall be en-

titled to issue publications in the name of THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA without formal permission of the Executive Board.

*Section 3.*

The Executive Board shall set aside such part of each member's annual dues as the Board agrees is sufficient for the publication of a news organ. This budgeted fund shall be used for such a publication, and the editorial staff of the news organ shall be instructed to keep their costs within the limit of that budget. They may, however, secure additional funds through the sale of advertising space, or through gifts or subsidies granted specifically for that purpose.

*Section 4.*

The Executive Board may undertake any publication which it considers suitable and for which it has the funds available. It may undertake long-range projects, involving future commitments, only after consulting the Advisory Council at an annual meeting.

*Section 5.*

The Executive Board may sponsor projects recommended by the Committee on Projects, in conjunction with other learned societies; and may accept funds for special purposes, provided those purposes are approved by the Committee on Projects and the Executive Board.

*Section 6.*

The Editor of *Renaissance News*, or any other periodical regularly published by the Society, shall be *ex officio* a member of the Executive Board.

ARTICLE VII. Regional Conferences and Local Groups.

*Section 1.*

The existing regional groups or conferences shall be entitled to representation on the Advisory Council of this Society so long as they remain active, that is, so long as they hold meetings at least once in every two-year period (except where suspension of activities is due to war or

other national emergency) and send duly elected or appointed delegates to the annual meeting of the Advisory Council.

*Section 2.*

New regional groups or conferences may secure representation on the Advisory Council by applying to the President of the Society for such representation. The Advisory Council will vote at its next meeting on the application. The new group may send one or two observers who are members of the Society, to represent it before the Advisory Council.

*Section 3.*

No one who is not a member of the Society may be a member of the Advisory Council.

ARTICLE VIII. Amendments.

*Section 1.*

Adoption of a new constitution, or of amendments to the existing constitution, proposed by the appropriate committee, must be notified to the members of the Advisory Council at least six weeks in advance of the annual meeting and shall require for adoption a two-thirds majority of the voting members present at the meeting.

*Section 2.*

Bylaws proposed by the appropriate committee must be notified to the members of the Advisory Council at least six weeks in advance of the annual meeting, but shall require for adoption only a simple majority of the voting members present at the meeting.

*Section 3.*

Voting by proxy shall be permitted.

*Section 4.*

In any procedure left in doubt by the Constitution, Robert's *Rules of Order* shall govern the Society.

BYLAWS

TO ARTICLE II. Purpose.

*Section 1.*

It shall be a purpose of the Society to apply, as soon as feasible, for membership

in the American Council of Learned Societies.

TO ARTICLE III. Membership.

*Section 1.*

Annual dues of regular members shall be \$6.00, or \$8.00 for a married couple; of sustaining members, \$10.00; of patron members, \$25.00; of benefactor members, \$100.00. The cost of life membership shall be \$250.00 in a single payment. Membership shall be regarded as beginning with the January 1 preceding admission (after the first year). Annual dues shall be payable each January, and any member in default thereof after July 1 shall be considered delinquent in dues. A delinquent member shall not be entitled to copies of periodicals or to notices of meetings of the Society until he is restored to active status by payment of dues for the year of his delinquency. A member still in default of dues at the end of the calendar year shall be dropped from the membership. Reinstatement may be effected by payment of current dues plus dues of any unpaid-for publications received.

*Section 5.*

A new member shall receive periodical publications by the calendar year.

TO ARTICLE IV. Organization.

*Section 2.*

A quorum shall consist of five voting members of the Board, at least one to be the President or the Secretary.

*Section 3.*

In the first year, the nominating committee shall be appointed by the Executive Board at least four months before the annual meeting.

*Section 4.*

Vacancy in the presidency shall be filled by election by the Executive Board until the next Council meeting.

*Sections 5-7.*

Vacancies shall be filled by the President with the consent of the Executive Board until the next Council meeting.

*Section 7.*

Of the Chairmen of the standing committees, two shall be elected each year, except the Chairman of the Committee on International Cooperation, who is to be elected at the same time as the Treasurer and the Executive Secretary.

*Section 8.*

A. By the term 'local group' is meant any inter-university Seminar, Institute, or Colloquium, or any group formed about museums, libraries, or similar cultural institutions, and meeting regularly at intervals of once a month or oftener.

B. The specializations or disciplines represented by the members-at-large, to which consideration shall be given, are the Visual Arts, Church History and Theology, Paleography and Bibliography, History of Classical Scholarship, Latin and Byzantine Literature, History (Political, Social, Economic, Cultural, and Legal), Italian, English, French, Hispanic, Germanic, and Eastern European Literatures, Music, Philosophy, the Sciences, and such other disciplines as the Executive Board may from time to time decide.

*Section 11.*

Substitutes for members of the Advisory Council under Section 9 shall be named

by the sponsoring body. Members of the Council under Section 10 may appoint their own substitutes.

*Section 12.*

In order to preserve records, all outgoing officers, including editors and chairmen of standing committees, shall deposit their records in the office of the Society, and their successors shall have access to records so filed, with power to abstract any necessary papers, but with the understanding that anything so abstracted shall be returned to the file at the end of their term of office, or sooner.

*Section 13.*

A Trustee shall be elected each year. At the first election, however, the three Trustees shall draw lots, one each for terms of one, two, and three years.

TO ARTICLE V. Duties of the Officers.

*Section 2.*

Notices of annual meetings of the Advisory Council shall be mailed six weeks in advance of each meeting.

TO ARTICLE VI. Publications.

*Section 6.*

The editors of all publications shall be appointed by the Executive Board.