

## A Concise History of the International Medieval Sermon Studies Society

Leo CARRUTHERS

- I. The foundation of IMSSS and its background.
- II. Constitutional revisions, by-laws and other business.
- III. The Council and its Officers: successive elections; some decisions made.
- IV. The Society's main activities:
  - A. The Symposium (with a note on the *Guidelines* and the Poster Session).
  - B. The Newsletter and its transition to a Journal.
  - C. The Archive.
  - D. Sponsored sessions at other international congresses.
  - E. The Website and Electronic Communications.

### **I. The foundation of IMSSS and its background:**

The International Medieval Sermon Studies Society (hereafter IMSSS), founded by a group of scholars from several different countries and continents, formally came into existence in July 1988 in Dijon, France, on the occasion of the sixth International Symposium on Medieval Sermon Studies, when the adoption of the founding charter was followed by the election of the first Council and Officers of the Society.

However, the movement which led to the foundation went back some years earlier, as will be evident from the fact that the Dijon Symposium was the sixth in a series started in 1979, the first five of which were organised single-handed by Gloria Cigman. And that series itself was directly related to the enthusiasm generated by the *Medieval Sermon Studies Newsletter*, launched by Gloria Cigman in 1977.

Gloria had begun by starting the Newsletter which led to many fruitful contacts, not the least of which was with Fr Louis Bataillon OP (1914-2009) of the Leonine Commission in Rome, who encouraged the idea of bringing scholars together for an international symposium. All of the early conferences were held at Linacre College, Oxford, organised by Gloria who was herself a member of the College, in 1979, 1980, 1982, 1984 and 1986. Without her efforts to promote this specialised area of research, it is clear that nothing would ever have got off the ground. Gloria therefore played a unique role, since it was her dynamism and vision that brought people together and gave the necessary impetus to the group who would go on to found the Society in 1988.

In 1986, shortly before the fifth Symposium in Oxford, Gloria Cigman wrote to all those who had registered in order to inform them that she could no longer continue to run things on her own and that she wished to hand over both the Newsletter and any future symposia to others –

presuming that anyone was interested in taking or sharing responsibility. As a result of this, a number of important collegial decisions were made by those attending the 1986 Symposium.

First of all, the **Newsletter**. Two people announced that they were willing to take on the task of editor: Valerie Edden (Birmingham) and Ronald Zawilla (St Louis). It was agreed that Valerie would do it for two years (1986-88), to be succeeded by Ronald in 1988. At the same time Gloria agreed – now that she had Valerie’s help – to continue handling the practical details of printing and despatch until 1988 and then to hand over this aspect, too, to Ronald.

Secondly, the **Symposium**. Fr Louis Bataillon OP, seconded by a number of other participants, suggested a rotating system of organisation on the lines followed by certain academic associations. The Symposium would move to a different country each time and a different local committee would take responsibility for it every two years. A group of French scholars volunteered to be the first on the list, and a French committee was formed, made up of Nicole Bériou, Jacques Berlioz, Jacques Foviaux and Leo Carruthers. Louis Bataillon suggested Dijon as a venue for the next Symposium (1988) because Jacques Berlioz, who lived there, was well placed to take care of the practical arrangements, especially finance, food and lodging. Leo Carruthers agreed to take charge of planning the programme and of writing to prospective speakers.

Thirdly, the **future Society**. Many voices were raised in favour of the idea of setting up an international society to act as an overseeing body with responsibility for the Newsletter, the Symposium, and other activities that might be of relevance to sermon studies. Phyllis Roberts and Larry Eldredge agreed to look at the constitutions of some scholarly associations in order to prepare a draft charter which would be discussed and voted on at Dijon in 1988. Phyllis was helped in this by her husband Earl, a lawyer, whose legal expertise may be felt in the charter’s careful and precise language.

Early in 1988, before the Dijon Symposium, Phyllis and Larry sent out a first draft of the charter to all those who had expressed an interest in seeing it, seeking comments and corrections. As a result of their input a final version was prepared and distributed to all the participants in Dijon. This was the subject of extensive discussion at the business meeting and some slight revisions were made before the ultimate version of the charter was agreed upon by all. The meeting in Dijon passed a positive motion in favour of creating a society having this founding charter as its constitution, upon which the IMSSS came into existence and the members of its first Council were elected (July 1988).

\* \* \* \* \*

## **II. Constitutional revisions, by-laws and other business:**

The constitution is available for consultation on the website, giving the revised text of 1998. Since 1988 only a small number of revisions or by-laws had been added to it.

The first by-law concerned the Society’s official headquarters, a subject that had not been mentioned in the founding charter, leaving the Society as such with no address other than those of its Officers, which regularly change.

Between 1988 and 1990 the first President, Leo Carruthers, sought to establish Linacre College, Oxford as the headquarters, the choice being dictated by the fact that Linacre held a special place in our collective memory since all the early Symposia had taken place there.

It was of course first necessary to obtain the agreement of the College's governing body. At the President's suggestion Gloria Cigman represented the Society's interests by discussing the matter with the College's principal, Sir Bryan Cartledge. Through his good offices the governing body accepted our request. The way was thus clear for a positive vote at the next IMSSS Symposium, which took place in 1990.

A revision of the constitution which had been discussed at the 1997 Council meeting in Kalamazoo was presented to the business meeting at the Erfurt Symposium in 1998 and adopted. The same Council meeting at Kalamazoo in 1997 also voted on the Symposium *Guidelines* (more details below) as well as on the proposal to develop the Newsletter into a Journal (see below).

The constitution makes provision for the holding of Council meetings in certain circumstances outside its normal meeting at the biannual Symposium. The meetings must be organised in accordance with the rules of the constitution and a quorum of four is necessary. Such meetings have been organised at various times, usually at the President's instigation, in Paris and at the Kalamazoo Congress. The first to be formally held took place in September 1991 at the Sorbonne, Paris, as reported in *MSS* no. 29, pp. 3-4.

Although the Council is technically restricted to the seven elected Officers and Councillors, invitations to attend such meetings should (and do) also include at least one member of each of the two sub-committees defined by the constitution, that is, the editors of the Newsletter or Journal and the organisers of the next Symposium, since these two sub-committees represent the Society's main activities.

The webmaster, or person responsible for the website, should also be invited to attend Council meetings if not already an elected member.

#### **Note on members' dues:**

The constitution makes membership of IMSSS subject to payment of a fee. For practical purposes, this is identical with the subscription to the Newsletter or Journal; but that arrangement could be changed by a by-law, if need be.

At the Lyon Symposium in 2004, a discussion took place with regard to the possibility of altering article V of the constitution in order to take into account the Journal's new commercial relationship with Maney Publishing, given that Maney fixes the price of the Journal. It must be clear, however, that in a case of this kind there is no need to tamper with the founding charter which governs the Society. Most practical decisions can be made by the Council at a business meeting without any necessity of altering the constitution. In point of fact no outside organisation is entitled to fix the members' dues, which are determined solely by the Council. While the members' dues do include an automatic subscription to the Journal, the cost of publication is a separate matter.

Since 1988 the Secretary has always been based in the USA, thus facilitating the collection of members' dues in dollars; this still holds good in 2008.

Between 1988 and July 2004 the Treasurer was based in the UK, payment being made in pounds sterling, while European members were required to send a banker's or postal order in the same currency.

Since the elections at Lyon in July 2004 the Treasurer has been based in Belgium. Payment by individual members from Europe and elsewhere (excluding the USA and Canada) is now made in euros only. For further details about methods of payment, which are liable to change from time to time, see the website and the inside back cover of the Journal.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **III. The Council and its Officers: successive elections; some decisions made.**

What follows in this section is a commentary on certain elements in the constitution; for more technical details see the constitution itself, available on the website.

The IMSSS Council is composed of seven members, each elected for four years with the possibility of succeeding oneself once.

The maximum period a person may serve continuously on the Council is therefore eight years. However, after a further period of two years has elapsed, that person returns to his/her original status and once again becomes eligible for election.

Not all Council members are elected at the same time, with the exception of the first Council in 1988. On that occasion certain members were elected for only two years instead of the normal four, in order to create a situation where future elections would be staggered, involving only part of the Council.

At a typical biannual Symposium a new Council comes into being, composed partly of newly elected members and partly of those who have completed two years and still have another two to go (see article VI of the constitution).

Each new Council then chooses its Officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. The Officers are chosen by their fellow Councillors, not elected to any particular office as such by the general assembly of the Society (see article VIII of the constitution).

It is clear that a person who is chosen as an Officer but who has only two years remaining on the Council can only serve as an Officer for that period.

What is less obvious is that if a member is newly elected to the Council, thus beginning a four-year term, and is then also chosen as an Officer, that person does not necessarily remain an Officer for four years, since the Officers change (or may change) every two years following the elections. It is of course perfectly in order for an Officer to be renewed in that position if the new Council agrees, but it should not be taken for granted as a right.

It may sometimes happen that no Councillor has completed a four-year term when the Symposium comes round, in which case there is no election at the business meeting. However, even if there is no election the Council still meets to agree upon its Officers for the next two years.

**The first Council** of the Society, elected in **1988** at Dijon (France), was composed of the following Officers and other members:

Serving a four-year term (1988-92): Leo Carruthers (President), Nicole Bériou (Vice-President), Phyllis Roberts (Secretary), Larry Eldredge (Treasurer).

Serving an initial two-year term (1988-90): Gloria Cigman, Jacqueline Hamesse, Roberto Rusconi.

**The second Council**, formed in **1990** at Assisi (Italy), was composed of the following Officers and other members:

Officers unchanged: Leo Carruthers (President), Nicole Bériou (Vice-President), Phyllis Roberts (Secretary), Larry Eldredge (Treasurer).

Councillors elected to a full four-year term (1990-94): Gloria Cigman, Jacqueline Hamesse, Carlo Delcorno (the latter replacing Roberto Rusconi, who did not seek re-election).

*Decision made at Assisi* (constitutional by-law): the business meeting voted in favour of the President's proposal to make Linacre College, Oxford, the Society's official headquarters, consequent upon the acceptance of the President's request by the College's governing body.

**The third Council**, formed in **1992** at Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium), was identical with the previous one since the same Officers were re-elected for a second four-year term and there were no other changes:

Officers unchanged (1992-96): Leo Carruthers (President), Nicole Bériou (Vice-President), Phyllis Roberts (Secretary), Larry Eldredge (Treasurer).

Councillors unchanged: Gloria Cigman, Jacqueline Hamesse, Carlo Delcorno.

*Decision made at Louvain-la-Neuve*: the Council voted unanimously in favour of making Gloria Cigman an honorary life member of the Society, in grateful recognition of her work for sermon studies as founder of the Newsletter and organiser of the first five Symposia, out of which the Society eventually grew. She is the first person to be thus honoured. In practical terms, it means that her membership fee will in future be waived. This decision was reported in *MSS* 31, Spring 1993, p. 5.

**The fourth Council**, formed in **1994** at Dublin (Ireland), was composed of the following Officers and other members:

Officers unchanged: Leo Carruthers (President), Nicole Bériou (Vice-President), Phyllis Roberts (Secretary), Larry Eldredge (Treasurer).

Councillors elected (incoming members for 1994-98): Stephan Borgehammar, Simon Forde, Beverly Kienzle.

**The fifth Council**, formed in **1996** at Oxford (England), was composed of the following Officers and other members:

Officers: Beverly Kienzle (President), Stephan Borgehammar (Vice-President), Anne Thayer (Secretary), Mary Swan (Treasurer).

Councillors: Simon Forde, Carolyn Muessig, Hans-Jochen Schiewer.

The newly-elected members for 1996-2000 were Carolyn Muessig, Hans-Jochen Schiewer, Mary Swan, and Anne Thayer.

*Decision made at Oxford*: the Council named the outgoing President, Leo Carruthers, as Honorary President and non-voting advisor to the Council in recognition of his services to the Society since its foundation in 1988 (see *MSS* 38, pp. 3, 7).

**The sixth Council**, formed in **1998** at Erfurt (Germany), was composed of the following Officers and other members:

Officers: Beverly Kienzle (President), Hans-Jochen Schiewer (Vice-President), Anne Thayer (Secretary), Mary Swan (Treasurer).

Councillors: Stephan Borgehammar, Laura Gaffuri, Carolyn Muessig.

The incoming member for 1998-2002 was Laura Gaffuri, replacing Simon Forde who did not seek re-election.

*Some revisions* were made to the constitution at the business meeting in Erfurt, particularly undertaken through the initiative of Stephan Borgehammar, following extensive discussion by e-mail in the previous two years, as well as a Council meeting in Kalamazoo in 1997. The text of the constitution which appears on the website is therefore the 1998 version, not the original 1988 charter (however, the overall changes are minor).

**The seventh Council**, formed in **2000** at Padua (Italy), was in fact identical with the previous one since those who had come to the end of a four-year term were returned and there were no other changes:

Officers unchanged: Beverly Kienzle (President), Hans-Jochen Schiewer (Vice-President), Anne Thayer (Secretary), Mary Swan (Treasurer).

Councillors unchanged: Stephan Borgehammar, Laura Gaffuri, Carolyn Muessig.

**The eighth Council**, formed in **2002** at Vadstena (Sweden), was composed of the following Officers and other members:

Officers: Hans-Jochen Schiewer (President), Nicole Bériou (Vice-President), Anne Thayer (Secretary), Mary Swan (Treasurer).

Councillors: Laura Gaffuri, Kate Jansen, Carolyn Muessig.

The incoming members for 2002-2006 were Nicole Bériou and Kate Jansen.

**The ninth Council**, formed in **2004** at Lyon (France), was composed of the following Officers and other members:

Officers: Nicole Bériou (President), Laura Gaffuri (Vice-President), Ronald Stansbury (Secretary), Martine De Reu (Treasurer).

Councillors: George Ferzoco, Kate Jansen, Jussi Hanska.

The incoming members for 2004-2008 were Martine De Reu, George Ferzoco, Jussi Hanska and Ronald Stansbury.

*Decision made at Lyon:* the Council voted unanimously in favour of making Fr Louis Bataillon OP an honorary life member of the Society, in grateful recognition of his work for sermon studies throughout his career, his enthusiastic encouragement of the Newsletter and the Symposia in their early years, and his contribution to the foundation of the Society in 1988. He was the second person to be thus honoured; in practical terms, it meant that his membership fee was waived.

Actively involved in research almost to his last moments, Fr Bataillon died in Paris on 13 February 2009 at the age of 94, deeply regretted by all the members of the Society.

**The tenth Council**, formed in **2006** at Budapest/Piliscsaba (Hungary), was composed of the following Officers and other members:

Officers: Nicole Bériou (President), George Ferzoco (Vice-President), Ronald Stansbury (Secretary), Martine De Reu (Treasurer).

Councillors: Jussi Hanska, Franco Morenzoni, Kimberly Rivers.

The incoming members for 2006-2010 were Franco Morenzoni and Kimberly Rivers.

**The eleventh Council**, formed in **2008** at Saint-Maurice (Switzerland), is composed of the following Officers and other members:

Officers: Nicole Bériou (President), Franco Morenzoni (Vice-President), Ronald Stansbury (Secretary), Martine De Reu (Treasurer).

Councillors: Jussi Hanska, Suzanne Paul, Kimberly Rivers.

Ronald Stansbury, Martine De Reu and Jussi Hanska were re-elected for a second term (2008-2012). George Ferzoco did not seek re-election but he will continue to coordinate electronic communications for the Society. He is replaced on the Council by Suzanne Paul, elected for a first term (2008-2012).

**The twelfth Council**, formed in **2010** at Salamanca (Spain), is composed of the following Officers and other members:

Officers: Franco Morenzoni (President), Jussi Hanska (Vice-President), Ronald Stansbury (Secretary), Martine De Reu (Treasurer).

Councillors: Roger Andersson, Suzanne Paul, Kimberly Rivers.

Franco Morenzoni and Kimberly Rivers were re-elected for a second four-year term. The incoming member for 2010-2014 is Roger Andersson.

*Decision made at Salamanca:* the assembled members voted unanimously in favour of making Phyllis Roberts an honorary life member of the Society, in grateful recognition of her work for sermon studies throughout her career, her enthusiastic encouragement of the Newsletter and the Symposia in their early years, and her significant contribution to the foundation of the Society in 1988. She is the third person to be thus honoured; in practical terms, it means that her membership fee is waived.

**The thirteenth Council** is due to be formed in **2012** at Brescia (Italy).

The following member will have completed one four-year term and is eligible for re-election in 2012: Suzanne Paul.

The following members will have completed two four-year terms and are therefore not eligible for re-election: Jussi Hanska, Ronald Stansbury, Martine De Reu.

Here follows an alphabetical list of all Council members, past and present, with the dates of their terms. The constitutional limit is two successive four-year terms but after a break of two years a person once again becomes eligible for election. The duration of their service as Officers of IMSSS is also given (limited to Officers defined as such in the constitution), bearing in mind that a member, though elected to Council for four years, holds office for only two years at a time (renewable).

ANDERSSON, Roger (2010-14).

BÉRIOU, Nicole (1988-92; 1992-96; 2002-06; 2006-10. Vice-President 1988-96 and 2002-04; President 2004-10).

BORGEHAMMAR, Stephan (1994-98; 1998-2002. Vice-President 1996-98).

CARRUTHERS, Leo (1988-92; 1992-96. President 1988-96).

CIGMAN, Gloria (1988-90; 1990-94).

DE REU, Martine (2004-08; 2008-12. Treasurer 2004-08, 2008-12).

DELCORNO, Carlo (1990-94).

ELDRIDGE, Larry (1988-92; 1992-96. Treasurer 1988-96).

FERZO, George (2004-08. Vice-President 2006-08).

FORDE, Simon (1994-98).

GAFFURI, Laura (1998-2002; 2002-06. Vice-President 2004-06).

HAMESSE, Jacqueline (1988-90; 1990-94).

HANSKA, Jussi (2004-08; 2008-12. Vice-President 2010-12).

JANSEN, Kate (2002-06).

KIENZLE, Beverly (1994-98; 1998-2002. President 1996-2002).  
 MORENZONI, Franco (2006-10; 2010-14. Vice-President 2008-10; President 2010-12).  
 MUESSIG, Carolyn (1996-2000; 2000-04).  
 PAUL, Suzanne (2008-12).  
 RIVERS, Kimberly (2006-10; 2010-14).  
 ROBERTS, Phyllis (1988-92; 1992-96. Secretary 1988-96).  
 RUSCONI, Roberto (1988-90).  
 SCHIEWER, Hans-Jochen *aka* Hajo (1996-2000; 2000-04. Vice-President 1998-2002; President 2002-04).  
 STANSBURY, Ronald (2004-08; 2008-12. Secretary 2004-08, 2008-12).  
 SWAN, Mary (1996-2000; 2000-04. Treasurer 1996-2004).  
 THAYER, Anne (1996-2000; 2000-04. Secretary 1996-2004).

**Presidents to date:**

Leo CARRUTHERS (1988-96).  
 Beverly KIENZLE (1996-2002).  
 Hajo SCHIEWER (2002-04).  
 Nicole BÉRIOU (2004-10).  
 Franco MORENZONI (2010-12).

**Vice-Presidents to date:**

Nicole BÉRIOU (1988-96).  
 Stephan BERGEHAMMAR (1996-98).  
 Hajo SCHIEWER (1998-2002).  
 Nicole BERIOU (2002-04).  
 Laura GAFFURI (2004-06).  
 George FERZOCO (2006-08).  
 Franco MORENZONI (2008-10).  
 Jussi HANSKA (2010-12).

**Secretaries to date:**

Phyllis ROBERTS (1988-96).  
 Anne THAYER (1996-2004).  
 Ronald STANSBURY (2004-12).

**Treasurers to date:**

Larry ELDREDGE (1988-96).  
 Mary SWAN (1996-2004).  
 Martine DE REU (2004-12)

\* \* \* \* \*

#### IV. The Society's main activities:

- A. The Symposium (with a note on the *Guidelines* and the Poster Session).
- B. The Newsletter and its transition to a Journal.
- C. The Archive.
- D. Sponsored sessions at other international congresses.
- E. The Website and Electronic Communications.

#### IV.A. The Symposium.

The earliest Symposia (**1979, 1980, 1982**) were devoted to methodological issues rather than a particular 'theme' and were wide-ranging in the areas dealt with by guest speakers, all of whom spoke on topics of general application to sermon studies.

A move in the direction of a theme was made in **1984**, when many papers examined the *content* of sermons, something that had not previously been the object of systematic investigation.

The **1986** Symposium (in **Oxford** like the previous five) was the first to explore a specific theme: 'Easter Preaching'.

The **1988** Symposium in **Dijon**, the first outside Oxford, had a broader and more general theme: 'Latin and Vernacular Sermons: Sources and Representations'.

Here follows a list of Symposia officially organised under the auspices of IMSSS since the Society's foundation in 1988; only the head or principal members of the local committee are named in each case.

**1990:** the seventh Symposium in **Assisi**, Italy (Roberto Rusconi).

Theme: Sacred and Secular Eloquence.

Some of the papers from the Assisi Symposium were published together in the journal *Ephemerides Liturgicae* (Rome, 1991).

**1992:** the eighth Symposium in **Louvain-la-Neuve**, Belgium (Jacqueline Hamesse, Martine De Reu).

Theme: The History of Medieval Preaching.

For the first time the entire Proceedings of the Symposium were published, under the title *De l'homélie au sermon: histoire de la prédication médiévale*, in a volume edited by Jacqueline Hamesse and published in Louvain-la-Neuve in 1993.

**1994:** the ninth Symposium in **Dublin**, Ireland (Terry Dolan, Alan Fletcher).

Theme: Preaching on the Apostles.

**1996:** the tenth Symposium in **Oxford**, England (Larry Eldredge).

Theme: Vernacular Preaching.

This Symposium, which marked a return to Linacre College after ten years, was dedicated to Gloria Cigman to celebrate her retirement from the University of Warwick. Beverly Kienzle announced that the volume on *The Sermon* in the 'Typologies des sources du moyen âge occidental' series would also be dedicated to Gloria (this book was published by Brepols in 2000).

- 1998:** the eleventh Symposium in **Erfurt**, Germany (Hans-Jochen Schiewer).  
Theme: Preaching Tools and their Uses.
- 2000:** the twelfth Symposium in **Padua**, Italy (Laura Gaffuri, Riccardo Quinto).  
Theme: Sermons and Society.
- 2002:** the thirteenth Symposium in **Vadstena**, Sweden (Stephan Borgehammar).  
Theme: Preaching and Community.
- 2004:** the fourteenth Symposium in **Lyon**, France (Nicole Bériou).  
Theme: Sermons and Liturgy.
- 2006:** the fifteenth Symposium in **Budapest/Piliscsaba**, Hungary (Edith Madas, Tamás Karáth, Otto Gecser).  
Theme: Texts to Read and Texts to Preach.
- 2008:** the sixteenth Symposium in **Saint-Maurice**, Switzerland (Franco Morenzoni, Paul Bernard Hodel OP).  
Theme: Preaching and Political Society / Prédication et société politique.
- 2010:** the seventeenth Symposium in **Salamanca**, Spain (Manuel Ambrosio Sanchez y Sanchez).  
Theme: Sermons in Other Discourses / Les sermons dans d'autres discours.
- 2012:** the eighteenth Symposium is being planned for **Brescia**, Italy (Laura Gaffuri).  
Theme: *Fides et jus*: dramatisation and ritualisation of law in the sermon.

#### **A Note on the *Guidelines*:**

The *Guidelines* are a series of recommendations for organisers of the Symposium. The first version was written by the Society's President, Leo Carruthers, in 1988 following the Dijon Symposium and was sent to Roberto Rusconi to help him with preparations for Assisi in 1990. Slight revisions were made to this text by Leo Carruthers every two years, in 1990, 1992, 1994 and 1996, before being sent to subsequent Symposium organisers. The changes did not concern any fundamental principles, but only variable details related to the successive sites of the Symposium.

After 1996 Leo Carruthers, as Honorary President, was no longer an elected member of the Council, but the *Guidelines* were still in use and were in fact adopted by later Councils and organisers. In 1997 the *Guidelines*, which the author had hitherto made available only to Councillors and Symposium organisers, were made the subject of discussion and revision at the Council meeting in Kalamazoo; the revised version was officially adopted at the business meeting in Erfurt the following year. It was typed out by Anne Thacker, Secretary of the Society, and sent to all members. It is currently available on the website.

**The Poster Exhibition** or **Poster Session** was first held in 1988 at the Dijon Symposium. It was organised and planned by Leo Carruthers who got the idea from a scientist friend. At scientific conferences, it appears, Poster Sessions were (and remain) a regular feature of the programme,

but they were practically unheard of in the Humanities at that time. A series of rules about size, shape and content, published in the Newsletter and sent out with the Symposium registration form, made it clear to prospective exhibitors at Dijon what was expected (see *MSS* 21, p. 5).

The success of this event quickly made it into a standard feature of all subsequent IMSSS Symposia. While the Poster Session is mentioned briefly in the *Guidelines*, more detailed rules are always sent out together with the registration form and other information for the next Symposium.

During the 1990s similar exhibitions were occasionally noted at other international congresses in the Humanities and the practice seems to be spreading. It is unknown to what extent the IMSSS custom may have had an effect, but in at least one case, that of a very large international organisation, our influence is certain. This is the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE), whose secretary wrote to Leo Carruthers looking for information about how to organise a Poster Exhibition. Details of the IMSSS rules were voluntarily sent in response to this request.

#### **IV.B. The Newsletter and its transition to a Journal.**

Editors and assistants of the Newsletter in its form as a twice-yearly periodical (this information is taken from the cover or inside cover of the issues mentioned):

1977-1986, Numbers 01 to 18: Gloria Cigman, editor and administrator;

Diana Wood, editorial assistant (nos. 5-8); Pat Odber, editor (nos. 12-14);

Vincent Gillespie, despatch (nos. 12-14); Irene Pearson, secretary (no. 15);

Joan Templeton, typist (from no. 2) and editorial secretary (no. 15);

Judith Atkins, archivist (nos. 12-19).

1987-1988, Numbers 19 to 22: Valerie Edden, editor; Gloria Cigman, administrator;

Joan Templeton, editorial secretary (nos. 19-21);

Simon Forde, archivist (nos. 20-38).

1989-1990, Numbers 23 to 26: Ronald Zawilla, editor and administrator;

Larry Eldredge, IMSSS Treasurer (subscriptions).

1991-1994, Numbers 27 to 33: Simon Forde, Veronica O'Mara, joint editors;

editorial assistants David Carter (no. 27), Laura Gaffuri (no. 28),

Charlotte Foster (no. 29), Eileen White (no. 30-33).

1994-1995, Numbers 34 to 35: Veronica O'Mara, Simon Forde, joint editors;

Carolyn Muessig, assistant editor; Eileen White, editorial assistant.

1995-1997, Numbers 36 to 39: Veronica O'Mara, editor; Carolyn Muessig, assistant editor;

Eileen White, editorial assistant.

1997-1998, Numbers 40 to 42: Carolyn Muessig, Veronica O'Mara, joint editors;

Eileen White, editorial assistant.

Editors of the Journal in its new format as an annual publication with editorial board:

1999-2002, Numbers 43 to 46: Carolyn Muessig, Veronica O'Mara, joint editors;

Eileen White, editorial assistant.

Since 2003 the Journal has been published in collaboration with a professional company, Maney Publishing (Leeds), in a new size and format.

2003-2010, Volumes 47 to 54, Carolyn Muessig, Veronica O'Mara, joint editors.

For issue no. 51 (2007), Veronica and Carolyn welcomed the addition of a Reviews Editor: Jonathan Adams of Copenhagen.

In 2008 four assistant editors were appointed to the team: Marjorie Burghart, Emanuele Fontana, Suzanne Hevelone and Ralf Lützelshwab.

In 2009 Carolyn Muessig and Veronica O'Mara announced that they would be stepping down after nearly two decades of editing the Society's journal. In an open letter, they made their announcement at the IMSSS Business Meeting held in Kalamazoo (May 2009) and on 13 June 2009 via the IMSSS mailing list. The change was planned to take place after the publication of *MSS* 54 (2010). They suggested that Jonathan Adams take over as Editor of *MSS* along with at least one other senior member of IMSSS to act as co-editor. They further stated that the final decision concerning the configuration of the editorial team should be made at the Council Meeting at the Salamanca Symposium in July 2010.

It was subsequently decided by the Council at Salamanca that the following new editors would take over: Jonathan Adams, Ralf Lützelshwab and Riccardo Quinto. Marjorie Burghart, Emanuele Fontana and Suzanne Hevelone would remain as assistant editors with the addition of Nirit Debby.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **From Newsletter to Journal**

As mentioned earlier, the Newsletter was launched in 1977 by Gloria Cigman, working from her home in Oxford and her office at the University of Warwick. Its aim was to create links between people working in the field of medieval sermon studies, in both Latin and vernacular texts and related academic fields. It quickly grew in volume and circulation, as well as in the number of fields covered. Its interdisciplinary nature was rapidly established as a major feature, for it soon became apparent that sermon studies were of interest to a great many scholars working in different areas of the Middle Ages.

The possibility of moving from Newsletter to Journal was soon mooted, though in the event many years would pass before this became a reality. As early as no. 2, dated Winter 1977/78, Gloria wrote as follows: 'Clearly, what we have here is a potential *journal*, with notes, queries, correspondence, bibliographies and articles' (p. 1); and in no. 3, Summer 1978, she outlined a plan to set up 'an international Editorial Board for the development, expansion and running of a new journal called *MSS* (*Medieval Sermon Studies*)' (p. 2). However, lacking consistent practical backup, this project did not get off the ground.

In 1986 Gloria handed over the task of editor to Valerie Edden of Birmingham, who agreed to do it for two years, while Gloria continued handling the practical details of finance, printing and despatch.

In 1988, at the time of the foundation of IMSSS, Fr Ronald Zawilla OP of St Louis took on the running of the Newsletter both as editor and administrator for the next two years. Gloria then sent him the remaining back-copies of the Newsletter which she had in stock.

Up to this point subscribers to the Newsletter had paid a subscription, which was now redefined as a membership fee within the context of the newly founded Society. Although it would have

been possible to envisage two separate payments, one a membership fee to the Society, the other a subscription to the Newsletter, this was felt to be too cumbersome for our needs and so the two were combined in one. The Council remains free to change this arrangement should the need ever arise.

The immediate, practical effect of the creation of IMSSS in relation to the Newsletter was the importance of the role given to the Secretary and the Treasurer, one of whom was in the USA, the other in the UK. Since they now became jointly responsible for the collection of members' dues (payment was possible either in US \$\$ or in ££ sterling), this took some of the financial pressure off the editor's shoulders. The editor could concentrate on content, while relying on the two Officers to provide him with the list of members entitled to receive the publication.

Another innovation to the Newsletter was the introduction of a section entitled 'Society News' which included 'A Letter from the President' or 'A Word from the President', enabling Council decisions and other matters to be communicated to the membership. The first such 'Letter' appeared in *MSS* 23, Spring 1989, pp. 5-8, in which IMSSS was introduced to readers and the history of the movement leading to the foundation of the Society was outlined.

In 1990, Ronald Zawilla handed over the editorship to Simon Forde and Veronica O'Mara. Four years later they were joined by Carolyn Muessig, first as assistant editor and eventually, in 1997, as joint editor (Simon had given up this position in 1995).

In the period 1997-99 the Newsletter went through a most interesting phase of transition to the status of Journal. This was accomplished under the guidance and supervision of Veronica O'Mara and Carolyn Muessig, joint editors since 1997, though the origins of the metamorphosis went back further.

Little by little the Newsletter had gone beyond the function indicated by its original title, especially when it began to publish articles and book reviews on a regular basis. It thus moved slowly, in accordance with Gloria's early vision and over a period of many years, in the direction of a journal.

In 1990 the then editors, Simon and Veronica, proposed that the word 'Newsletter' should be dropped from the title and that the periodical should be renamed more simply, *Medieval Sermon Studies*. This was adopted for no. 27, Spring 1991, though the word 'Newsletter' continued to appear on the cover, in front of the number, down to no. 37, Spring 1996.

The word 'Issue' was used in front of the number for nos. 38-39, after which it was dropped in favour of the number alone, from 40 onwards (Autumn 1997).

With more articles being published, Veronica and Carolyn felt that the time had come to establish *Medieval Sermon Studies* as a fully fledged journal, appearing on an annual basis rather than twice a year as had previously been the case; it was to be entirely composed of articles and book reviews, to have an Editorial Board and to appear in a new print format. After many discussions with the IMSSS Council in the period 1996-98, including the business meeting at Kalamazoo in 1997, this was finally put into effect in 1999 (no. 43).

This process was taken a stage further in 2003 (no. 47) when the journal was printed and distributed for the first time by a professional publishing company. Veronica and Carolyn had carried out negotiations with Maney Publishing of Leeds, with whom they had discussed a possible contract, which the editors presented to the IMSSS business meeting for a vote at the Vadstena Symposium in 2002.

The Journal continues to be published under the auspices of IMSSS and to include Society news with the now traditional 'A Word from the President'. While the content is the responsibility of the joint editors, acting in the name of IMSSS and with the help of an Editorial Board, the printing and despatch are handled by the company, Maney Publishing.

As mentioned above, Carolyn and Veronica stepped down from their role as editors in 2010, after having worked on the publication of Volume 54 for that year. With the setting up of a new editorial team for Volume 55 onwards (2011), the editors and assistant editors of *MSS* have become truly multinational and multilingual, bringing together a broad range of expertise and representing many different strands in the field of sermon studies.

#### **IV.C. The Medieval Sermon Studies Archive.**

The archive grew spontaneously out of the Newsletter quite simply because it was initially a collection made by Gloria Cigman, at first in her own home. This came about because many readers of the Newsletter, in addition to sending in reports about their research and publications, also sent Gloria copies of their books and articles, all of which were mentioned in the relevant section of the Newsletter.

After a few years the collection reached such proportions that Gloria could no longer keep it at home; furthermore, she sought a way to make it available for scholars visiting Oxford to consult. Clearly some sort of institutional arrangement was needed.

An initial solution was provided by Blackfriars, the Dominican house of studies in Oxford, through the good offices of Fr Osmund Lewry OP and Fr Simon Tugwell OP. The archive was transferred to Blackfriars in 1982 (see *MSS* 10, p. 2).

Help was given for several years by Judith Atkins who catalogued the collection and kept it up to date as new items arrived.

Simon Forde took on this role in 1987 and carried on for ten years, during part of which time he also served as joint editor of *MSS*. In *MSS* 24, Autumn 1989, Simon reported that he was in the process of creating an archive catalogue on computer (p. 44). The collection grew rapidly, all items received being listed in *MSS*. It was not always easy, however, for visitors to see the archive, since Simon lived far away in Leeds and the Blackfriars librarian was not always available. A more practical solution was therefore required.

In 1997 David d'Avray of University College, London, negotiated an agreement with the Warburg Institute in London, whereby the entire archive was donated to the Institute and was made accessible there on open shelves. This was reported in *MSS* 39, pp. 3 and 38. Subsequent publications were to be sent to David d'Avray for cataloguing, an arrangement that still stands.

#### **IV.D. Sponsored sessions at other international congresses.**

##### **Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo:**

In 1982 Gloria Cigman gave a paper entitled 'Matter and Method in Popular Preaching' at the 17<sup>th</sup> International Medieval Congress in Kalamazoo.

Two years later saw the first full session at Kalamazoo devoted to medieval sermon studies, the beginning of an annual series proposed by a group of North American scholars. Many of the participants were, and still are, subscribers to the *Medieval Sermon Studies Newsletter* or *Journal*, and some also attended the early Symposia in Oxford. From 1984 to 1998 the Kalamazoo sessions were organised by Beverly Kienzle, who was also president of IMSSS for part of that period and beyond (1996-2002).

Phyllis Roberts was one of the early leaders of medieval sermon studies in both North America and Europe. She was among those who, at Oxford in 1986, enthusiastically supported the idea of creating an International Society. As mentioned above in relation to the founding charter, Phyllis and her husband Earl, together with Larry Eldredge, were responsible for preparing the initial draft of the charter which was eventually adopted in Dijon (1988) as the IMSSS constitution. She was also most active in promoting the early sermon studies sessions in Kalamazoo. With the founding of IMSSS it thus became natural, from 1989 onwards, for the Kalamazoo sessions to be formally placed under the auspices of the new Society, and to be advertised as such in the Congress Program.

These sessions function independently of the IMSSS constitution and consequently are not subject to its control in the same way that the biannual Symposium is. Nevertheless they are officially sponsored by IMSSS and so make up a most important part of the Society's international activities.

While it is in the nature of the event – or of its geography – that the Kalamazoo sessions attract a larger number of North American scholars, many IMSSS members from Europe and Australia have taken part too, some on a regular basis.

All of the Kalamazoo sessions have been regularly reported in the pages of our periodical, *Medieval Sermon Studies*, with full details of participants and their topics since 1984; many of these reports were provided by Beverly Kienzle.

Beverly also negotiated an important agreement with the Congress organisers that still holds good, namely, that in years when IMSSS holds its biannual Symposium (normally in Europe) there would be *three* sermon studies sessions in Kalamazoo, while in other 'non-symposium' years there would be *five* sessions in Kalamazoo.

In 1995 the Society was especially honoured to be represented by its Secretary, Phyllis Roberts, who had been chosen as one of the plenary speakers at Kalamazoo. The congress was also attended for the first time by the then President of IMSSS, Leo Carruthers, who had the pleasure of introducing Phyllis on that occasion. Among other things, this was an opportunity for us to draw attention to the Society and to make it better known.

Leo Carruthers also called an official Council meeting of the Society at Kalamazoo in 1995, the first such meeting to take place in North America.

The Proceedings of the 1995 sessions were published in a volume supported by the Society, entitled *Models of Holiness in Medieval Sermons*, edited by Beverly Kienzle, Edith Dolnikowski, Rosemary Hale, Darleen Pryds and Anne Thayer (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1996).

Another official meeting of the Council took place at Kalamazoo in 1997, called by the President, Beverly Kienzle, during which various proposals to move the Newsletter in the direction of a Journal were debated. The revision of the *Guidelines* for the Symposium was also discussed at that time, a revision later voted and adopted at Erfurt in 1998.

Some papers from other sermon sessions in Kalamazoo and New York appeared in a volume of Proceedings entitled *Medieval Sermons and Society: Cloister, City, University*, edited by Jacqueline Hamesse, Beverly Kienzle, Debra Stoudt and Anne Thayer (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1998).

Since 1999 Anne Thayer, Secretary of IMSSS between 1996 and 2004, has been responsible for organising the Kalamazoo sessions. The IMSSS luncheons have also been successful in attracting new members and generating interest in the Society.

### **University of Leeds:**

In 2002 some of our members attending the Vadstena Symposium discussed the desirability of organising a sermon studies session at the annual International Medieval Studies Congress held at the University of Leeds, England.

Many of our members attend this congress regularly. Some of them, in fact, had played an important role in its inception and development: Simon Forde was one of its early organisers, and Mary Swan, for long our Treasurer, is still a member of the Leeds steering committee. But up to this point there had been no session specifically sponsored by IMSSS. This plan was put into effect for the first time in 2003 and has been maintained.

### **The Renaissance Society of America:**

Since 2008 we have had a session of papers at the annual meeting of the Renaissance Society of America, which is held in a different venue each time: Chicago (2008), Los Angeles (2009), Venice, Italy (2010). See the RSA website for the society's next conference, to be held in Montreal, Canada in 2011.

## **IV.E. The Website and Electronic Communications.**

The first website was launched by George Ferzoco on 1 September 1996 with the address [www.ex.ac.uk/imsss](http://www.ex.ac.uk/imsss) (see *MSS* 38, p. 7), later discontinued. George Ferzoco also created a separate electronic mail list for the Council members which is of great use for rapid communications and has been of much help in planning the Society's activities.

In 2000 the website was moved to Harvard under the direction of the second President, Beverly Kienzle, who appealed for suggestions and contributions to expand it (see *MSS* 45, pp. 2-3). The Harvard address was: [www.hds.harvard.edu/special/imsss](http://www.hds.harvard.edu/special/imsss) (inactive at present).

In 2003/04 the third President, Hajo Schiewer, developed a new website in Germany with the address [www.sermon-studies.de](http://www.sermon-studies.de). He also announced that an electronic newsletter, to be available only to IMSSS members, would be sent out four times a year with information about events and developments in sermon studies (mentioned in *MSS* 46, p. 3). The address for contributions was given as [hans-jochen.schiewer@germanistik.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:hans-jochen.schiewer@germanistik.uni-freiburg.de) (in *MSS* 47, p. 4), but this project did not meet with much success and was later dropped. The German website was also discontinued in 2006.

In July 2006 George Ferzoco, a Councillor since 2004 who was also named Vice-President at Budapest/Piliscsaba in 2006, was appointed by the Council as Communications Officer for two years (2006-2008, then renewed 2008-10), having a particular responsibility for coordinating both print and electronic communications.

The question of electronic communications was given close attention by members of the Council who met in July 2006. Emphasis was placed on the importance of creating a new website not specifically linked to a particular country or university, housed by a non-geographic server. Kimberly Rivers, who had just been elected to the Council for the period 2006-2010, agreed to set up and maintain the new site with the help of her husband Kim, who is experienced in creating websites. The new address is [www.imsss.net](http://www.imsss.net).

It is clear that the website has the potential to be an excellent means of advertising and promoting the Society's activities and that ideally an electronic newsletter would also fill a gap. There have been teething problems but this area is gradually being developed; it was proposed in

Budapest to create an electronic mail list for all members in order to facilitate the sharing of information.

In many respects the new technology is capable of providing the kind of service which the original Newsletter was designed to do, by putting on line items of personal information which are not considered suitable for the Journal in its new format.

Such information could include: lists of members with their address and academic affiliation, their research interests (directly or indirectly related to sermon studies), details of their publications, queries, requests for help and so on. All of these things made the old Newsletter vibrant and personal in ways that generated much enthusiasm from its readers. A journal which is mainly composed of articles and book reviews cannot be expected to have the same kind of intimate character as a newsletter; but the website, the electronic newsletter and the mail list can easily do so.

In fact, when the old Newsletter was being moved in the direction of its journal format, one of the major arguments put forward in favour of a new style for our printed periodical was that electronic communications had now become a more dynamic and ergonomic way of keeping people both informed and in touch.

A certain amount of interactivity could be envisaged for the webpage, but of course, the formal content of the site has to be under the control of a webmaster who officially represents the IMSSS. This may require clarification from time to time, depending on changes within the Council. Should the person responsible not already be an elected Councillor, measures need to be taken to ensure that the webmaster acts in close cooperation with the current President and Council.

\* \* \* \* \*

The first edition of *A Concise History of IMSSS* was written in 2004 by Leo CARRUTHERS, Honorary President, after the Lyon Symposium. The Council members in office at that time read it in draft and made corrections where necessary, as did the other two past presidents, Beverly KIENZLE and Hajo SCHIEWER, together with the editors of *MSS*, Carolyn MUESSIG and Veronica O'MARA. The author wishes to express his thanks to all those who checked the details before accepting the text for online publication.

The text was revised and updated by Leo CARRUTHERS following the Symposium in Budapest (2006), in Saint-Maurice (2008) and in Salamanca (2010) and was posted on the website with the approval of the current Council members and editors.

Last update: 2 September 2010.