

VANA Minutes for October 4, 2011:

The meeting was held in St. Andrew's United Church.

Present: Phyllis Creighton, Marion Frank, Jean Gordon, Bill Harasym, Lois James, Bea Levis, Lee Lorch, Bruce Mutch, Eileen Swinton, Audrey Tobias, Anton Wagner. Regrets: Mac Makarchuk.

Opening Remarks: Jean Gordon expressed her thanks to all the individuals in VANA who have done a yeoman's job in keeping the organization going. Phyllis Creighton stated VANA could never have continued without the great amount of work carried out by Audrey Tobias. Eileen Swinton and Phyllis recalled the great warmth of the late Joyce Sutherland in encouraging new VANA members. Marion Frank, who led the organization after Peter Davies, recalled being caught up in the enthusiasm of 70 or 80 members and the feeling of accomplishment at meetings on the part of veterans in the political struggles of the time.

Program: Phyllis Creighton read a two-page report commenting on our stimulating speakers and program history of the last few years. This report will be circulated in the next VANA newsletter.

Treasurer: Bruce Mutch presented a financial report showing an October 26, 2010 bank balance of \$3,344.50 and income since then of \$1,203.18 for a total of \$5,047.68. Expenses to October 4, 2011 totaled \$2,969.41 leaving a current bank of \$2,078.27. The October 2011 VANA membership list included 67 names of which 25 had paid their dues for the year. Several of those present renewed their membership for the next year.

Chair Report: Audrey Tobias indicated she was stepping down as the VANA co-ordinator because of physical fatigue setting in. The job of the co-ordinator is to organize membership meetings, convene co-ordinating committee meetings, keep in touch with members and with other peace organizations, honour VANA's "vision," and keep on top of peace activities, concerns and campaigns.

VANA needs a newsletter editor and publisher, a membership secretary and a regular secretary and a social convener. Audrey had done all these jobs by herself in the past and asked how do we go on from here.

Audrey read a letter from Harold Keeton who thought that the passion with which the organization had been founded is now gone but also mentioned that Jordan Bishop was eager to continue representing VANA on the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. She was proud of VANA's 25-year history and of successfully working together with other peace groups such as the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace over the last few years.

Reflection from Members: Bill Harasym stated that we are living in a difficult ideological period. Because of age considerations and other personal and political commitments, he was not sure what he could contribute. He still talks about VANA at other meetings and thought there were still things we can do. Could we publicize VANA by publishing a booklet?

Anton Wagner thought that instead of publishing a booklet, we could revive the VANA website and add excerpts from the video oral history interviews he and Eddy Cabrera had filmed with VANA members.

Bea Levis, speaking as a wife of a veteran, thought we had to look at a new stage of our existence. She liked the suggestion of putting the oral history video excerpts on the internet. She was extremely grateful to all the VANA members who made the organization go and hoped we could keep the VANA memory alive in a different form.

Lee Lorch stated that he came to the meeting out of respect for people such as Audrey who have been an inspiration. He doesn't want to see this disappear and thought we can continue to work with younger people and other peace organizations.

Bruce Mutch said he was willing to continue as treasurer and hoped we could continue to enable the voices of 67 members to be heard. Phyllis stated she was willing to continue with programming and reported on all the government lobbying for nuclear weapons abolition and against nuclear power generation. Jean Gordon and Bruce felt we needed to preserve progressive public consciousness and keep the converted motivated and activated. Marion mentioned the organizing by native groups against uranium mining and dumping. Lee said the consequences of a nuclear accident staggers the human imagination and recalled three Mile

Island and past accidents with nuclear weapons.

Phyllis thought she sensed that we wanted VANA to continue. Jean volunteered to participate on a telephone committee, tackling the out of town members. Bea thought she could help in this way too.

Motion: Moved by Anton Wagner, seconded by Jean Gordon, that VANA continue in existence and that a new VANA co-ordinating committee consisting of Bruce Mutch, Phyllis Creighton, Anton Wagner and Audrey Tobias be elected. Carried unanimously.

Bill Harasym moved, seconded by Bea Levis, that Phyllis Creighton be added as a signer of VANA cheques. Carried unanimously. It was agreed that the \$20 membership fee be collected for 2012.

Anton volunteered to help Audrey with sorting the VANA archives. It was agreed that Jordon Bishop in Ottawa continue to represent VANA on the Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

November 11: Bruce Mutch will lay the VANA wreath. The next VANA newsletter should go out the beginning of November.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned.