



Ottawa Society
of Painters
in Water Colour

21 Briarcliffe Drive
Ottawa
K1J 6S3

November 24th, 1981.

Please note that after January 1st, 1982, all activities
of the Society will be restricted to paid-up members.

If you have not paid your 1981-82 subscription please do so
if you wish to remain a member

If you are indubt please contact Janet Thurm, Membership
Secretary

Dear Member,

The promised Special General Meeting is being called for
December 10th to discuss critical changes in the constitution of the Society
and to establish the basis for a programme of activity.

The meeting will be held in Room 240 of the School of Medicine
of the University of Ottawa at the corner of Nicholas and Somerset East, at
7.30 p.m. on Thursday December 10th. Ample free parking will be available in
a lot immediately adjacent to the Medical School.

This meeting is important. It will set the course of the
Society for the foreseeable future and the groundwork has been carried out by
the Executive in a series of meetings as promised in my letter of September 30th.
That letter was sent out to over one hundred present and past members of the
Society but stimulated only six replies. However the participation in the
Place du Centre Exhibition leads me to hope that this poor response does not
truly reflect an almost complete lack of interest in the Society on the part
of its membership.

Hard work and long hours were put in on your behalf by the
Executive and by a small number of members who helped with the Exhibition, but
the Society should not be forced to thrive on the activity of only a few
interested people. We now have the strength, the opportunity and, I hope,
the determination to become a significant and, eventually, a powerful
influence in the field of watercolour painting, and the holding of Fellowship
in the Society will then have real meaning.

Our future will depend in large measure on the decisions taken
by the membership on December 10th and I most sincerely hope that all members
will either attend the meeting or will write to Audrey Ross or myself before-
hand so that we may represent their concerns in formulating our Constitution
and programme of activity.

It is important that the Society establish Bylaws with a
view to registration as a non-profit organisation so as to become eligible
for Federal, Provincial and Municipal grants. In addition the conditions of
membership need revision and the functions and tenure of office should be
clarified. To this end proposed Bylaws were formulated by a working party
of Audrey Ross, Robert Mann and myself and these have been extensively
discussed by the Executive. A copy of the third draft is enclosed.

Most of the proposals should be non-controversial but there are some critical issues which must be settled in open discussion. Amongst these are:

1. The name of the Society - should this be bi-lingual?
2. Grades of membership. It is suggested that three grades of membership should be retained but that the conditions for each of the two senior grades should be altered in a highly significant manner.

Associateship conferring of Associateship should no longer require assessment of five works by a jury as originally stipulated but in fact never carried out. Selection of works for two juried exhibitions should qualify an Affiliate for admission to Associateship.

Fellowship The changes suggested for the most senior grade of membership are critically important. In the original constitution it was laid down that no one could become a "Full" member of our own Society unless he or she first achieved membership of the Canadian Society. I, personally, regard this condition of membership of our own Society as totally unacceptable and the Executive agrees that it should be eliminated. In its place we have suggested a set of conditions which places our own senior membership within our own control while at the same time exacting the highest standards for the conferring of that honour. We further suggest that holders of this senior rank be termed "Fellows" of the Society, partly to eliminate the ambiguity which at present surrounds the term "member", split as it is into three different grades, and partly to denote the spirit which we hope the Society will henceforth hold. If this term is agreed to, we suggest also that the term "member" be dropped from the other two grades as well so that the Society will be composed of "Affiliates", "Associates", and "Fellows" all of whom together make up the membership and will be collectively addressed as Members of the Society.

4. Privileges - At present no privileges attach to the senior grades of membership. It is felt by some that there should be concrete recognition of the higher status and it has been suggested that Associates should be privileged to hang one, and Fellows up to three unjuried works at each juried exhibition of the Society. This is a highly controversial issue since some members feel that it would lead to an uncontrollable deterioration in standards of work. Would members please give careful thought to this question and also to possible alternatives.

If the new conditions of membership (under whatever names) are approved the Executive will move that a jury be established to meet early in the New Year to assess submitted works from Associates who wish to apply for Fellowship in the Society. The next juried exhibition has been arranged to take place at the Den Art Gallery for a period of four weeks from the last Thursday in March, 1982. If hanging privileges are to be held, it is important that adequate time be permitted to newly appointed Fellows before sending in Day.

yours sincerely,

John C.N. Westwood, President.

