

**ALUMNI
eNEWSLETTER**

No. 48

October 2023

Greetings from the Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools! As required by our bylaws, please find included a notice of our Annual Meeting which will be held virtually on Zoom on **Wednesday, November 1, starting at 6:00pm** Eastern Time in connection with the VSA Annual Meeting.

Also included is an Agenda for the meeting and reports. Please review these documents in advance and be prepared to ask any questions at the meeting.

If you have not yet done so, please remember to renew your membership in the Alumni Association. SEE: [VSA Alumni](#)

Renewals in the last three months of 2023 will be valid through 12/31/2024.

NOTICE

2023 Annual Meeting of The Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools



WHAT: Annual Meeting as required by our bylaws

WHEN: **Wednesday, November 1, 2023**
6:00pm PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
5:00 pm CT, 4:00 pm MT, 3:00 pm PT.

WHERE: Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting a few minutes before 6:00pm by clicking on:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85254985924?pwd=E7mYxG5yL5iliExb39jp5aR51RI7Up.1>

Meeting ID: 852 5498 5924

Passcode: 597797

If you are joining by phone, you can find your local number
at: <https://us06web.zoom.us/u/keukdnrq3n>

Contact: David Lamdin at dalamdin@gmail.com or 703.243.2350

Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools
Annual Meeting Draft Agenda
November 1, 2023 on Zoom

1. In the absence of Correspondence Secretary Jeanne Solensky, David Lamdin, President, calls the meeting to order and certifies that a quorum is present. The Alumni members present at the meeting constitutes a quorum per the bylaws.
2. Dispense with reading the minutes (attached) since they were distributed to all members before the meeting. Questions/Comments? MOTION to approve. **VOTE**

Reports: (one motion to accept all reports at the conclusion)

3. Membership Report: Travis Brock Kennedy (About 190 members as of 10/18/2023) Q/A
4. Study Tour Report: John Martine (Lisbon); David Lamdin (Bologna April 23 to April 29, 2024) Q/A
5. James Russiello: Social Media Report. Q/A and Treasurer's Report: See below for 12/31/2022 Financial Statement

Endowment Fund as of 9/30/2023: \$201,380
CD for \$30,000 at 4% due 12/1/2023
Checking Account as of 10/18/2023: \$7,645
Pittsburgh Account: Pending
6. Finance Committee Report: Jim Butrick (Endowment Investment) Q/A
7. President's Report: David Lamdin. Q/A
8. Correspondence Secretary Jeanne Solensky (David Lamdin) calls for a motion to accept the reports.

11. Questions/Comments? MOTION to Adjourn

Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools

Annual Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2022 on Zoom

Correspondence Secretary **Jeanne Solensky** called the meeting to order and certified that a quorum was present. The Alumni members present at the meeting constitute a quorum per the by-laws.

As minutes from the May 5, 2021 meeting were distributed to members before the meeting and no questions were posed, Jeanne called for a motion to approve them. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved with a vote.

President **David Lamdin** gave Membership **Secretary Sara Durkacs**'s report in her absence. The Alumni Association has 217 Households registered as dues-paying members which means about 256 individual members, an increase over last year. The Association offered \$25 hardship "COVID-19" membership dues and 85 Alumni renewed at this level. The 2023 renewal will appeal to current and recently lapsed members (1/1/2018 through 1/1/2023) by direct mail and email (approximately 400 records).

David also read Alumni Study Tour Director **John Martine**'s report as John is currently in Lisbon meeting with people to firm up the schedule and details after several pandemic postponements. The Portugal tour is now scheduled for March 8-19 2023 with a full contingent of 30 attending with a few on the waiting list. There is \$39,000 in the Pittsburgh account to cover the cost of the Portugal trip.

Treasurer **James Russiello** summarized the financial report (see attached). Of special note, the Alumni Association provided \$21,600 in Summer School Scholarships. The Main account balance as of 10/31/2022 was \$43,129.10.

James, also the Social Media Chair, reported on activity. The Alumni Association of the Victorian Society Summer Schools 1 (the "AA FB page") retains 286 likes and 297 followers. Between May 18 and May 23, David Lamdin published 19 posts containing photos from the Denver study trip. David published a 20th post on May 24 celebrating Queen Victoria's birthday. Linked posts by Anne Malleck were published simultaneously on the VSA national FB page, the AA page, and the VicSocAmerica Instagram Account, which is shared between the AA and the VSA national. These included the daily summer school photo posts from June 5 through July 10 for Newport, Chicago, and London, and from the 2nd Take a Seat Fall Lecture series.

On June 5 (start of the Newport Summer School), June 17 (start of the Chicago Summer School), and June 26 (start of the London Summer School), the AA page posted a series of posts with up to 14 photos each from each day of the summer schools.

Recently on Oct 27, the AA page has started to post weekly advertisements for upcoming virtual lectures on Zoom that are part of the summer school's Take a Seat lecture series. Due to the combined posting referring to links (Instagram posts do not activate links), the VicSocAmerica Instagram account was suspended on October 31, 2022 because the account posting did not follow Community Guidelines. This appears to be caused by the Instagram account's use of the national email account. There are 30 days to disagree with the decision, which appear to have occurred due to the combined posting, and James has started that process

Jim Buttrick gave the Finance Committee report discussing the status of the Endowment Fund. Jim reported that Performance of the Endowment Scholarship Fund has closely tracked a very negative market with a year-to-date decline of 18%. Among our five equity sectors and one fixed income sector, all were negative,

with international equity being the worst performer and high yield fixed income holding up better. Jim noted that our holdings correlated very closely with the sector benchmarks we had chosen, thus producing the market diversification we wanted. The disappointing results can be attributed primarily to the steady increases in interest rates implemented by the Federal Reserve in its attempt to moderate inflation. The market remains vulnerable to further interest rate increases in next few quarters, but it responds very positively to any signals that the Fed will pivot to a less restrictive policy. This we expect to happen over the next year. The strategy of our portfolio being managed by eCIO has been to be defensive through maximum diversification of geography and asset classes. When our fund was initiated, we knew the market was fully valued. We invested the principal gradually in the hope of improving the average prices paid, but we did not invest gradually enough. Given the prospect of interest rates leveling off, the market outlook for the next year looks much improved, with our assumption that a severe recession can be avoided. As of 10/31/2022, the Endowment Fund had a balance of \$186,503.

The last report was David's President's Report. There were no recruitment events in 2022. With the return of the Summer Schools in 2022, the Alumni Association renewed its practice of sponsoring a reception for the Summer Schools students. We sponsored a reception at the Glessner House for the Chicago students. For the London students, we sponsored a reception hosted by the Director of the London Victorian Society. The Newport reception was graciously hosted by Pauline Metcalf.

The Alumni Association was pleased to be able to provide \$21,600 for scholarships to 2022 Summer School students. The Alumni Association published seven eNewsletters so far in 2022.

These well received digital newsletters continue to provide an effective and inexpensive means of informing our members of items of interest to the Alumni.

Many members of the Alumni Association participated in, supported, and thoroughly enjoyed the excellent video lectures presented by the VSA in 2022.

After the reports concluded, Jeanne entertained questions. Hearing none, she called for a motion to accept all reports. Once approved, she then called for a motion to adjourn which was also approved.

VSA ALUMNI ASSOC Main, Pitts, & Endowment Fund Acts Inc/Exp 12/31/2022				
	Main	Endowment	Pitts	TOTAL
Balance 1/1/2022	61,019	227,509	45,330	333,858
2022 INCOME				
Membership Dues	8,075			
Donations to our AA Scholarship Funds	4,472			
Events (Lisbon Tour Deposits)			6,450	
Dividends and Interest		4,383		
Donations		350		
Change in Value of Investments				
12/31/2022 TOTAL INCOME	12,547	4,733	6,450	23,730
2022 EXPENSES				
Brokerage Fees		1,588		
Membership solicitation	76			
Gnosis Membership Software	1,140			
Member communications				
Website Maintenance				
Donations: VSA Annual Chapter Dues	100			
Bank Charges	128			
Summer Schools Receptions	750			
Summer Schools Scholarships	21,600			
Portugal Trip Refund Deposits			7,500	
Portugal Trip Pymt to local Guide			4,000	
Portugal Trip Wire Transfer Fees			60	
Portugal Trip Bus Company Deposit			1,777	
Income Reinvested	1,182			
Change in Value of Investments	40,627			
12/31/2022 TOTAL EXPENSES	23,794	43,397	13,337	80,528
12/31/2022 NET INCOME (LOSS)	-11,247	-38,664	-6,886	-56,797
ACCOUNT BALANCE 12/31/2022	49,772	188,845	38,444	277,061
(BOTH BANK BALANCES)				
End of 2012				35,273
End of 2013			20,507	39,250
End of 2014			38,352	58,952
End of year 2015				42,481
End of year 2016	18,810		42,364	61,174
End of year 2017	33,090		17,364	50,454
End of year 2018	49,692		30,340	80,032
End of year 2019	108,791		12,910	121,701
End of year 2020	152,189		46,580	198,769
End of year 2021 (Main & Endowment)	288,528		45,330	333,858
End of year 2022	49,772	188,845	38,444	277,061
Tangible assets	laptop and software Purchased 1/25/2018 for \$459 plus tax and shipping charges			
	David A Lamdin			
	703-243-2350 home			
	571-332-4220 Cell			
	dalamdin@gmail.com			

Membership Report

2023 190 members

2022: 217 members

2021: 185 Households + 49 = 234 Total memberships

2020: 206 Households + 50 = 266 Total membership

2019: 177 Households + 57 = 234 Total membership

2018: 147 Households + 53 = 200 Total membership

Alumni Association President's Report of 2023 Activities

We paid our \$100 Chapter Dues and contributed \$250 for a Zoom presentation for a Chicago recruitment event in January 2023.

We contributed \$24,000 for Student Scholarships to the 2023 Summer Schools.

We continued our sponsorship of receptions for the 2023 Summer Schools students and friends. We contributed \$500 for receptions in Chicago and \$500 for a reception in London. **Pauline Metcalf** graciously sponsored a reception for the Newport students at her summer home.

We purchased a \$30,000 CD coming due in December 2023 at over 4% interest to get some interest on the money in our non-interest bearing checking account.

From a small miscellaneous fund and as a one-off event, we joined with VSA national and responded to the call of the VSA NYC Chapter for assistance. We donated \$100 for a live, in-person program presenting author Michael Kathrens' lecture on the luxury and splendor of Newport's nineteenth-century summer "cottages," in his most recent book, *Newport Cottages 1835-1890: The Summer Villas Before the Vanderbilt Era*.

We have been in contact with **John Cooper**, our alumni webmaster, to update our Membership Form on the website and to begin the transfer of information on the Alumni website to our page on the VSA website.

We published six eNewsletters so far in 2023. These well received digital newsletters continue to provide an effective and inexpensive means of informing our members of items of interest to the Alumni.

Many members of the Alumni Association participated in, supported, and thoroughly enjoyed the excellent video lectures presented by the VSA in 2023.

At the 2021 Annual Meeting, a new Board of Directors was elected for the period 2022 through 2024. We will need to have new elections at next year's annual meeting. Anyone interested in serving on the Alumni Board or in helping with our administrative tasks should contact the Alumni President.

The Alumni Association expresses its deep appreciation to **Sara Durkacs** who resigned a Membership Secretary due to the pressing needs of her job. Sara's efforts over the past several years has been crucial to our success and survival. We wish Sara all good fortune in the years ahead. As Membership Secretary, *Emeritus*, Sara is helping in the training of **Travis Brock Kennedy** as the new Alumni Membership Secretary. Many thanks to Travis who brings his Organization Development skills to this task. Travis is also a member of the Alumni Board of Directors.

Last but far from least, our enduring and deep gratitude to **John Martine** who successfully led the Alumni Study Tour Program. After over 30 years of extraordinary effort and service to the Alumni Association as the volunteer director of the Alumni Study Tour Program probably raising approximately a quarter of a million dollars to fund Alumni Scholarships, **John Martine** (London 1979 and 2013, Newport 2007, and Chicago 2016 and 2019) has decided to step back from that role but will continue to serve the Alumni as the Study Tour Director, *Emeritus*, providing the Alumni with his expert advice and assistance on future trips. The Alumni Association has solicited interest about this position and has received several notices of interest. We will address this issue as soon as the planning for the Italy trip is concluded.

The Alumni Association very much appreciates the efforts of its officers and directors whose efforts enable the Alumni Association to be an entirely volunteer organization.