Guide to Life Membership Procedure

The position of ‘Life Membership’ can be bestowed on those people who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to contribute to the culture of the Society. These members shall not have a subscription fee levied on them.

UWA Pantomime Society Constitution (4 August 2014)

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to explain the procedure used for bestowing Life Membership on members of the UWA Pantomime Society. It is intended to help members hoping to nominate somebody for Life Membership, Committee members unsure about their roles in the process (especially Secretary and Webmaster), and members who have been selected as jurors but don’t really understand what is going on.

Constitution

The key points of the procedure are described in the Constitution (accepted 4 August 2014):

3.9. The position of ‘Life Membership’ can be bestowed on those people who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to contribute to the culture of the Society. These members shall not have a subscription fee levied on them.

3.10. Applications for Life Membership shall be submitted to the Secretary. To avoid compromising the legitimacy of the bestowal by voting in front of the nominee at a General Meeting, the Secretary, with the assistance of the Webmaster, will coordinate a jury of six members who shall decide whether the evidence provided in the application is sufficient for the bestowal of Life Membership.

3.10.1. The jury will be composed of randomly selected members who have participated in two Society productions in the previous eighteen months. The nominee, applicant, Secretary and Webmaster will be ineligible for selection. Jury members will be kept anonymous from each other by conducting discussions and voting on an online forum.

3.10.2. If a juror does not respond to the summons in a reasonable amount of time, or does not believe they can participate fairly in the decision-making process, they will be replaced by another randomly selected individual from the list of those eligible.

3.10.3. At least five of the six jurors must vote in favour of bestowing Life Membership for the application to be successful.

3.10.4. The Secretary and Webmaster will not be eligible for Life Membership while in those
positions.

3.10.5. If the nomination is unsuccessful, the nominee may not be nominated again until after the next Biannual General Meeting. If somebody nominates a person who has already been nominated unsuccessfully since the previous Biannual General Meeting, the situation will be explained to them.

3.11. The Secretary shall maintain a list of the life members.

Procedure

Eligibility

Anyone can be made a life member so long as a jury agrees that they have met the criteria set out in the Constitution (in Article 3.9). However, the Secretary and Webmaster cannot be nominated for Life Membership while they are in those positions, because they coordinate the decision process and this would create a conflict of interest.

The Applicant

If you think someone has gone above and beyond the call of duty to contribute to the culture of the Society, please nominate them for Life Membership! Without nominations the award will be forgotten.

If you want to nominate somebody for Life Membership all you have to do is fill out a Life Membership Application Form, which you should be able to find on the website. (If you are having trouble finding it just ask around or email uwapanto@gmail.com and somebody should be able to help you.) The form asks for four pieces of information: your name and email address, so you can be kept in the loop after submitting the form, the name of your nominee (i.e., the person you wish to nominate for Life Membership), and the evidence for your nominee’s eligibility (i.e., why you think they meet the criteria). You should try to be precise and objective in describing the evidence so that the jury can easily understand what they are trying to compare against the eligibility criteria. For instance, whether or not you think your nominee is an awesome person is not really relevant to the jury’s decision (although I’m glad you have found someone for whom you feel that way).

After you have filled out the form, send it to the Secretary (if you do not know who the Secretary is check the website or ask around). It is best to send it to them privately (e.g., via a private email account or on Facebook), because if you send it to uwapanto@gmail.com a lot of people will be able to see the application and one of them may be your nominee.

The Secretary and the Webmaster

Once the Secretary has received the application form, their first job is to check whether the form is filled out correctly. If the nominee is the Secretary or the Webmaster, the application will be denied, or at least delayed until they are no longer in that position. The Secretary may return the application to the applicant if the evidence is not appropriate for a jury (e.g., if it is uninterpretable or irrelevant). They should also try as well as possible to confirm the validity of the evidence (e.g., if the applicant claims the nominee has been on Committee a certain number of times they should check that number). The applicant will be notified of any changes to the evidence before it goes to the jury. The duties conducted
here by the Secretary may be performed in collaboration with the Webmaster, who is required for the next part of the process.

Once the evidence provided in the application is deemed fit for consideration by the jury, the jury will be assembled. Members of the Society (i.e., people who have paid their membership fee) who have participated in at least two Society productions in the previous eighteen months are eligible for the jury. This enhances the likelihood that the members of the jury will understand the position of the nominee within the Society, and hopefully means they will be less likely to feel like the whole procedure is irrelevant to them personally. The nominee, applicant, Secretary and Webmaster may not be jurors. Six jurors should be selected randomly from the list of those eligible. The Webmaster should then set up the special juror accounts on the forum so that the jury can make their discussions and decide an outcome. Instructions for randomly selecting jurors from a list of those eligible and setting up the forum accounts are given in the Webmaster Manual in the uwapanto Google Drive.

The Jury

The six jurors should each receive an email from the Webmaster and/or Secretary (from a private account – we don’t want everyone with access to uwapanto@gmail.com knowing who the jurors are). The email should explain how to log into a special juror account on the forum on the website, which will give access to a hidden forum for discussing Life Membership applications (this forum should appear empty for each new jury). The purpose of conducting the discussions online is that the jurors will remain anonymous to each other (unless they intentionally reveal themselves), which will allow them to express opinions against the nomination (should they have any) without damaging friendships. The jurors will receive email notifications when there is a new post in this forum.

The jurors’ job is to decide whether the evidence provided by the applicant meets the criteria described in the Constitution (i.e., whether the nominee has “gone above and beyond the call of duty to contribute to the culture of the Society”). At the beginning of the forum thread the Secretary and/or Webmaster will give the name of the nominee and the evidence provided in the application (corrected if necessary), as well as reminding the jury of the criteria for Life Membership and providing the reasons for bestowing Life Membership upon previous nominees. The jurors will then discuss whether they think the evidence meets the criteria, and make a decision. If they have any questions they can contact the Secretary or Webmaster. The Secretary and Webmaster will moderate the discussion and push for a vote if a decision is not forthcoming. At least five of the six jurors must agree that the evidence meets the criteria for the nominee to be made a life member.

In the event that a juror does not respond to the initial email or does not participate in the discussions, the Secretary and/or Webmaster will attempt to contact them about it. If they do not respond in a reasonable amount of time, they will be replaced by randomly selecting a new juror from the list of those eligible. If a juror does respond but does not believe they can participate fairly (e.g., if they have a deep-seated hatred for the nominee) they may also be replaced.

Once a decision is reached the Webmaster will detach the jurors from the special juror forum accounts and the Committee and applicant will be notified of the decision. The discussion from the forum thread (with jurors remaining anonymous) will be stored in the uwapanto Google Drive before removing from
the forum, so that investigations may be conducted if necessary (e.g., if there are accusations of foul play).

**The President**

In the event of a successful nomination, the President will announce the new life member at the next Biannual General Meeting. At this point the new Life Member (and the reasoning behind the bestowal) will be added to the Awards section of the website.

**The Nominee**

In the event of a successful nomination, the nominee will discover that they have become a life member. If the nomination was unsuccessful, the nominee might never find out (unless they were also the applicant, or someone told them unofficially). If anyone still believes the nominee is eligible they may nominate them again after the next Biannual General Meeting (this is to limit vexatious re-nominating). If a nominee is nominated twice by different applicants, the second not realizing the process is already underway or has ended unsuccessfully (and a BGM has not yet occurred), the Secretary will let them know what is going on and why the application therefore cannot be accepted at that time.

**Changes to this Procedure**

Any change to this procedure that does not contradict the wording or spirit of the Constitution may be made by the Committee by simple majority vote at a properly convened Committee meeting. Members will be notified of the change by email and this document will be updated to reflect it. Any change that is not congruent with the Constitution requires a properly made constitutional amendment (and if successful this document will be updated to reflect the change).