Minutes of the Twenty third Annual General Meeting of the Liverpool History Society.

Held on: Tuesday 14th May 2024 1030 hrs at Liverpool Athenaeum.

1. Chairman's welcome, introductions and reports

The Chairman Tony Melling welcomed those in attendance and continued with his Report.

Chairman's Report

Thank you for taking the trouble to attend our AGM today. We only have thirty minutes, so I'll try and ensure our officers have sufficient time to report. An apology for absence is made by Chris Jones, so you will have to put up with me to introduce Gavin Hunter, for what promises to be a very stimulating focus on Port Sunlight.

The past year has been one of outstanding growth, reaching membership levels we have never enjoyed before, which are now at over 500 from 440 last year. As you will hear from both Corinne and Sue, this has enabled us to more than combat our rising costs with a membership income of £14,000 against an expenditure of £9,000.

Your presence also attests to an unprecedented increase in attendances, averaging over 100 at each meeting. Within this we have seen a very welcome addition of over 30 Blue Badge Guide trainees to our ranks and we hope you will stay with us.

Our range of services is also expanding. As well as the growing website collection of recorded talks (and due credit for creating these must go to Ted Scaplehorn), we now have not one but two summer visits to look forward to: the Princes Road Synagogue in July and the enhanced Western Approaches Museum in August.

And for the first time, the initiative of Sue McGuire our Membership Secretary has resulted in a seminar on Thursday at the Central Library, to explore research pathways for aspiring authors. Hopefully we will witness some of the fruits of this in future Journals.

While we're here I would like to pay a special tribute to our past Chairman, John Tiernan, who made a generous donation to the Society in his will and for whom we will dedicate an annual talk in his memory. Thank you too to John Pinfold, whose generosity this year enabled us to return the Journal to its glorious full colour.

Finally, sincere thanks should go to you all for your loyal support in helping to reinforce our cultural role in the life of Liverpool.

2. Minutes of the 22nd AGM held on 12TH September 2023 and Matters Arising.

The minutes of the 22nd AGM were sent out to all of the membership prior to the meeting.
The motion to accept them was proposed by Sue McGuire and seconded by Kim Rawlinson.
The motion was carried, with all voting in favour.

Actions from the previous meeting were completed as follows:

- Possibility of meals being included as an option during Talks/lectures were considered and a trial carried out but due to economic reasons it was proven to be unsuccessful and the decision taken not to continue.
- Non renewals of members when their membership remains an issue and is covered in the Membership Secretary notes.

3. Membership Secretary Report

The Membership Report had already been sent out members prior to this meeting. Sue McGuire summarised her report as follows:

As of 31st March 2024 the Society had on its database 459 'Active' subscriptions. As 54 of those subscriptions were joint we therefore had 513 members. From April 2023-24 active subscriptions increased by 65. We had 110 enrolments but 45 members failed to renew.

Life Memberships.

We had 50 life memberships until recently but communications with these members has resulted in 14 of them resubscribing on an annual basis. We are very grateful for the additional income this has generated. One life member has also requested their journal be sent digitally – an option which also helps in terms of expense.

Growth

Membership has continued to grow which is very welcome. We are managing the pressure on our talk's venue and this has led to some changes over the year in the rooms we use and the timing of talks. Our survey shows that 'Word of Mouth' continues to be the main way that people hear about the society. Thank you to all those who recruit new members for us in this way.

Digital Membership

Digital membership continues to be a very popular option at 35% of our total subscriptions. Digital members receive their journals in digital format rather than print copy. All other benefits remain the same. We would encourage any members who are happy to take the journal in digital form to take up that option which is £5.00 less than print copy membership. The digital option requires less outlay on the journal and postage and ensures more funding can go towards venues and speakers.
Around 25% of our members live outside the Merseyside area and so will rarely be able to take up the opportunity of attending talks. The continuation of video recordings gives these members an excellent alternative to attendance in person.

Gift Aid

There are 72 members who have not indicated their agreement to Gift Aid. We would encourage all members to look again at the conditions of Gift Aid as it adds a significant extra contribution to our funds from HMRC with no additional cost to members.

Payment methods

The most efficient way for us to collect subscription payments is through members setting up payment through the website as they join. This results in automatic annual renewal till the subscription is cancelled. We find that it runs smoothly for the majority of members. I am

happy to assist people by phone and face to face after the end of our talks to use the website for payment. I am happy to continue to assist members where they are having difficulties with any method of payment. 95% of our paying members are now paying through the website.

Non-renewal and cancellations

Our cancellations are mainly from those who take up the subscription for a year and then decide not to carry on. We did have some cancellations last year because of the change in time of the talks but those members have since returned. I take the approach of asking for feedback from those who have chosen not to resubscribe and hoping for their renewed

4. Journal Editor Report

Tony Melling presented the Journal Editor report on behalf of Iain Jackson, due to his absence and commitment to work.

"The improved print quality and colour of the latest Journal has been excellent and received favourable comments from the membership.

"We have ten articles being prepared for the 2025 Journal which are under review at present.

We're hoping to have the drafts completed by the end of September, with layouts and production starting in October.

I'd like to thank our excellent proof readers and reviewers.

5. Programme Secretary Report

John Bruce resigned from his position in 2024 and Chris Jones was appointed as his replacement.

Kim Rawlinson summarized the Programme Secretary's Report on behalf of Chris Jones, who was absent due to planned holidays. Kim Rawlinson stated that the 2024/25 Programme has now been finalised and will be published on the website shortly.

From the beginning of 2024 there has been an increase in demand for talks and the venue has now been moved to the Athenaeum Dining room which increased the Meeting Room capacity from 60 to 100. The talks have been so successful that the capacity will be increased from 100 to 120 for the remainder of this year and 2025.

Two Events have also been planned as follows:

- Western approaches 29th July and 28th August with a guided tour form the Pierhead.
- A guided tour of the Liverpool Princes Rd Synagogue 31st July.

Both Events will be bookable on Eventbrite.

With regard to the Princes Rd Synagogue Event, Robin Makin gave a brief presentation about the celebration of its 150 years in existence and future events during 2024 Heritage Season. More information is available on the website www.princesroad.org/heritage.

6. Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Accounts for 2022/2023.

Corinne Jones presented a summary of the Accounts for 2023-24 as follows:

Journal Costs have increased but entire cost has been completed in this financial year. Costs also include postage of journal this year.

Speaker's fees remain the same £45.00 per speaker
Membership As of April 2024 has increased and includes a fee for new members taking the Blue badge training.

A beneficiary of £1000 was received from Mrs Tiernan from the estate of her husband John a previous chairman. A donation of £500 was paid by John Pinfold towards the journal costs. Both of which are greatly appreciated.

Fay Carter as librarian has sold off many copies of books increasing the LHS bank account total.

Refreshment/misc. costs look high but this is due to payments for meals at the Athenaeum after talks this was repaid by members.

Summary of Accounts for 2023-2024. The end of year balance was £16431.42 compared with £11715.37 last year.

Many thanks to Tony our Chairman, Chris and Kim For organising events, Susan for membership, Bill as secretary, Fay as librarian, Mary as refreshments supervisor and Tom who will taking over as Treasurer from Corinne

7. Appointment of Examiner for the 2024/25 Accounts.

Stephen Gent was thanked for his diligent and professional examination of the 2023/2024 Accounts and has agreed to continue in this role next year. The proposer for the motion to accept the Annual Accounts for 2023/2024 and the appointment of Stephen Gent as Examiner was Bill Carr. The seconder was Tom Lacy. The motion was carried, with all voting in favour.

8. Election of Officers and Committee Members for the Coming Year.

The Chairman confirmed the resignation of Helen Avis (IT and graphic designer) along with John Bruce (Programme Secretary) and Corinne Jones (Treasurer) to be replaced by Peter Lang, Chris Jones and Tom Lacy respectively. Mike Tremarco has also been appointed Communications Officer. The Chairman thanked the outgoing officers for their hard work whilst in office and welcomed our new officers

The existing Committee Members (Fay Carter, Bill Carr, Kim Rawlinson, Tony Melling, Iain Jackson, Sue McGuire and Mary Silva) were put forward for re-election.

The above resignations, appointments and re-election of Committee were proposed by Kim Rawlinson and seconded by Mike Tremarco. The motion was passed unanimously.

9. Consideration of Matters Raised by Members

No matters were raised.

10. Any Other Business.

No matters were raised.

The AGM was closed at 1055 hrs and the Chairman thanked all for their attendance and participation.