

BARNES LITERARY SOCIETY



Report and financial statements year ended 31 July 2021

Presented at the AGM 22 March 2022

www.barnesliterarysociety.org.uk

Barnes Literary Society
Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2021

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Society Information

Patrons	Isla Blair Julian Glover Roger McGough Patrick Neate. Jan Pieńkowski. Fiona Smith	Venetia Vyvyan Rhidian Brook Harriett Gilbert
Committee	Jo Weinberger (Chair) Kathy Owles (Vice Chair, Membership Secretary) Kathy Kock (Treasurer) Sue Pandit (Events Secretary) Louise Carr (Hospitality) Caroline Storey (Secretary) Fina Mason (Events Manager)	
Principal address	PO Box 28868, London SW13 9XH	
Bankers	HSBC 172 Upper Richmond Road Putney London SW15 2SH	
Independent examiner	John Forbes Nova Cura 1 Ibis Lane London W4 3UP	

Barnes Literary Society

Annual Report for the year ended 31 July 2021

Season 20/21 was another season in which the pandemic, and its accompanying government rules and regulations, dogged our much-anticipated programme.

We were excited to be able to open the season with an in-person talk in the church in October. However, although large gatherings were sanctioned by the government, our event was, by necessity, of a very different nature to our usual events. The Committee arrived early to clean all surfaces that members might touch, arrange socially-distanced seating and check quantities of hand sanitiser. Members, who had been required to pre-book to attend, were requested to take up their seats straight away. There was no opportunity to buy a drink and with strict 'no mixing between household' guidelines in place, there was no chance to catch up with friends. But members dutifully donned their face-coverings and took up their solitary, socially distanced seats. And it was definitely worth it because Tom Holland was magnificent! He treated us to a wonderful, enthusiastic talk on his book *Dominion: The Making of the Western Mind*, explaining how Christian values remain such a large part of the secular agenda and how Christianity's enduring impact is not confined merely to churches.

With the capacity of the church capped and many members not able to attend live events, we were pleased to have made the decision to film each of our talks. To this end, we employed Kate Levy from Mindplan Productions and she produced a high-quality film of Tom's talk. The link for the film was sent out to all members following the talk.

November arrived and as anticipated the government disallowed live events; it was no longer possible to host our scheduled talk in the church. Thankfully, Toby Faber was happy to be filmed via Zoom and Kate produced another high-quality film, complete with Toby's presentation slides. It was interesting to watch our author on screen, utilising the latest skills of the 21st century, whilst he led us through the 20th century history of Faber and Faber, from its beginnings as a publisher of nursing magazines to its place now at the top of the literary tree.

By January, we were in another national lockdown. Happily, Professor Helen Taylor agreed to film her talk on her book, *Why Women Read Fiction*. Professor Taylor gave us a broad insight into the world of books by women and for women, garnered from her extensive research into women's reading habits. As one of our members noted, it was 'a most enjoyable and impressively authoritative talk.'

Still in lockdown, in February we moved onto politics. Journalist Phil Collins interviewed Tom Bower about his book on Boris Johnson, *The Gambler*. Phil and Tom delivered a fantastically wide-ranging interview, covering Boris's drive and energy, his relationship with the truth and his fluctuating position on Europe.

In March, we were fortunate to watch our patron, Harriett Gilbert, interview Nikita Lalwani about her book *You People*, again on Zoom. Nikita's book on the underground existence

forced upon many of the UK's illegal immigrants was both eye-opening and thought-provoking.

The continuing Covid regulations meant that we were unable to offer an outing in April.

Our final programmed event in May was still on Zoom! Our very own Anja de Jager, BLS member and fellow crime author, interviewed the crime writer Mark Billingham. Mark and Anja discussed Mark's acclaimed Tom Thorne thrillers, whilst also discussing crime writing in general. It was fascinating to hear two crime writers revealing some of the secrets of their trade.

Although many of the restrictions began to lift at the end of May and gatherings of large groups of people were once again permitted, the virus was still very much a concern. After prolonged discussion, the Committee decided to host an additional in-person talk in the spacious venue of the church, rather than host a summer party. And we were incredibly lucky to secure Natalie Haynes for the evening. Natalie talked about her book *Pandora's Jar: Women in the Greek Myths*. She treated us to a fabulously fun evening during which she gave us all the ins and outs of the stories of Jocasta and Clytemnestra but from the female point of view. It was wonderful!

Natalie's talk was followed by our postponed AGM. At the AGM we passed two motions. One was to amend the constitution thus enabling us to apply to register as a charity, and the second was to alter the financial year to run from August to July.

We did suffer a dip in membership numbers for 20/21 but this is understandable given the circumstances. Our total for Season 20/21 was 333. But I am delighted to report that this season we have recovered somewhat and our current membership stands at 364.

Our single membership fee remained at £30 equating to £5 a talk. As I said last year, and the year before, this remains fantastic value for money for the opportunity to listen to such high quality speakers. The 21/22 season has seen us continue with a subscription fee of £30 per single membership and we shall not be increasing subscriptions for the coming season.

We are very lucky to have such supportive patrons at the BLS and I would like to say a big thank you to all of them. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to Joanna Trollope who agreed to become a patron at the beginning of this season.

As you know, Jan Pieńkowski passed away in February. Jan was a patron from the outset. Full of suggestions and ideas, he arranged the banner and volunteered to do the annual brochure and publicity. He also invited the Society to use his lovely garden for the first party and together with David Walser gave a talk on their beautifully illustrated book *Sacred and Profane*. He was a great support to the BLS.

I would like to thank the Barnes Community Association (BCA) for providing coverage of our events in their online monthly magazine, *Prospect Plus*. I would also like to thank Sarah Arthur for including us in the *Barnes Bugle*; *Arts Richmond* for their coverage; and all of the local shops, businesses, libraries and organisations which take our publicity.

I would also like to thank St Mary's for allowing us to use the church, Phil Bladen for his help and support with the sound tech, and Izzy Lovell for our event photographs. I would like to thank Kate Levy of Mindplan Productions who provided us with films of such an excellent quality for each of our talks.

All of the events put on by the BLS take a lot of organising. This is facilitated by our marvellous committee of volunteers. I should like to thank all of them for their enthusiasm and hard work. I should also like to thank Penny Kegerreis for helping us with the set-up and cleaning.

Sadly, as well as losing Jan this season, we also lost one of our Committee members, Caroline Storey. Caroline was an enthusiastic member of the Committee. She was well read, thoughtful and always brimming with ideas. She will be sorely missed.

I would like to comment briefly on the treasurer's report, attached below. Despite being unable to make income from bar sales or from the summer party, due to pandemic restrictions, and despite costs incurred filming all seven of the season's talks, we remain in the black. I am delighted to report that we have weathered this last couple of tricky years well and remain in a strong financial position. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you, the members, for continuing to support the BLS through these difficult times.

Whilst needing to keep a small financial buffer to cover unforeseen eventualities we were also conscious of meeting the objectives of our society in providing and promoting literary opportunities for the public benefit in the Borough of Richmond. To this end the BLS made a donation to the 2021 Barnes Children's Literature Festival. In previous years TFL has funded transport for state-funded primary schools so that all children of the borough have the opportunity to attend. However, due to the pandemic, TFL withdrew their funding leaving many children unable to go. The BLS gave a sum of £500 towards the cost of transporting children to the festival. This enabled 60 children from the Deer Park Primary School in Richmond to attend the Barnes Children's Literature Festival.

Further to this, in light of the successful registration of the BLS as a charity this season, we have finalised a grant-making policy. Where possible, we will offer small grants and bursaries to organisations that meet the charity's objectives. The grant-making policy, along with all of our other policies can be found on the web-site.

Jo Weinberger
Chair, Barnes Literary Society

The Barnes Literary Society

Income and expenditure account for the period ended 31st July 2021

	2021	2020
INCOME		
Subscriptions:	10,400	12,140
Guest fees	0	1,160
Ticket event fees	0	0
Bank interest	0	6
Profits from the bar	0	681
Donation	100	0
Total	10,500	13,877
EXPENDITURE		
Room Hire	650	1,900
Regular events		
-Filming	4080	0
-Speaker fees	3000	1,200
Special events	176	0
Printing, stationery & publicity		
-Stationery, postage, PO Box rental	484	258
-Printing, copying	406	365
-publicity	70	100
Website	285	669
Insurance	321	321
Accountancy	300	300
Bank charges	16	0
Grants and bursaries	500	270
Total	10,289	5,383
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	212	8604
Reserves brought forward from previous year	22177	13573
Reserves carried forward to next year	22,389	22,177

**The Barnes Literary Society
Balance Sheet at 31 July 2021**

		2021		2020
Current assets				
Cash at bank - current account	18,952		20,710	
Cash at bank - deposit account	4,037		4,037	
		22,989		24,747
Prepayments		0		0
		22,989		24,747
Creditors				
Accrued expenses	600		300	
Subscriptions in advance	0		2,270	
		(600)		(2,570)
Net current assets		22,389		22,177
Represented by:				
General reserves		22,389		22,177

Basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards.

Approved by the committee on 14 March 2022 and signed on its behalf by

Josephine Weinberger
.....
Chairman

Korber
.....
Hon Treasurer

The Barnes Literary Society

Independent Examiner's Report to the Committee of The Barnes Literary Society

As described on page 7, you have approved the financial statements for the period ended 31 July 2021 set out on pages 6 and 7. In accordance with the Constitution, I have examined these financial statements without carrying out an audit and confirm that they are in accordance with the records and the information and explanations supplied to me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Forbes', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Forbes

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