

Approved by members at the AGM on 27 March 2019

## **Minutes of the Barnes Literary Society AGM held on 18 April 2018 at the OSO Arts Centre, Barnes Green.**

**Present:** Jane Skerrett, Chair; David King-Farlow, Vice Chairman; Patrick Harvey, Honorary Treasurer; Sarah Kearney, Caroline Kelsall, Kathy Owles, Louise Carr, Jo Weinberger (co-opted) Committee members; Fiona Smith, Julian Glover, Isla Blair, Patrons and 28 society members.

### **1. Introduction by the Chair**

Jane Skerrett welcomed members and thanked them for staying on for the AGM. She highlighted the documents available to members including the agenda, minutes of last year's AGM, the annual report for the year ended 30 September 2017, and the financial accounts for year ended 30 September 2017, which were available to all present.

### **2. Apologies for absence**

Noel Davison, Sue Pandit

### **3. Minutes of the AGM held on 18 April 2017**

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Claire Boyling and seconded by Sheila Hayward Smith and the resolution to approve the minutes was passed on a show of hands.

### **4. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **5. Chairman's Report**

The Chair advised that she would not read out the entire report but pick out some key items. She reported that 2016/2017 had been very successful with well attended events and a range of excellent speakers from the Shakespeare scholar, Professor Emma Smith, to Kate Silverton interviewing the ex-soldier Harry Parker about his novel set in Afghanistan. The Chair noted that the programme had been well received, contributing to the higher membership take-up and the pleasing income figures that the Honorary Treasurer will expand upon in his report. However, she noted that the society must not be complacent about finances with additional expenditure required this year on the website.

The Chair commented on the huge success of the summer party featuring the gin expert, Ian Buxton, talking the society through different flavours of gin and how they are produced. The Chair extended her thanks to Louise and Nick Carr, and Kathy and Peter Owles, together with their army of helpers, for all their hard work in organising the event, and Sarah Kearney for her hard work on the raffle. She also thanked BLS members, the Warrilows, for donating the Fever-Tree mixers, and all those who attended and supported the event.

The Chair drew attention to the first creative writing class for beginners hosted by the BLS, which was well supported, and thanked the author, Joy Rhoades, for her time and enthusiasm in taking the class.

The Chair also thanked the BLS patrons, Isla Blair, Julian Glover, Roger McGough, Jan Pieńkowski and Fiona Smith; Venetia Vyvyan from the Barnes Book shop; the staff and trustees at the OSO and the Methodist Church; the BCA, with particular reference to Steve Mindel; the Barnes Bugle; web master Anne Cotgreave; and Alan Trehitt, the terrific sound engineer, for their continued support.

## **6. Treasurer's report**

Patrick Harvey, Honorary Treasurer, referred members to the Income and Expenditure account and balance sheet for the year. He drew attention to the bottom line of page 5 of the treasurer's report which shows a net surplus, in contrast to the previous year's net deficit. He made the following comments. Subscriptions form the bulk of the BLS income and were up by £600, raising nearly £8200 in 2016/2017. There was also an increase in income from ticketed events, which, taking into account event expenditure, totalled £2312, with the gin themed party raising £1658 alone.

The total expenditure on direct costs, included room hire at £1383, the hire of the sound system and technician at £2880, speakers' fees at £1,240, and the BLS contribution to the OSO raised seating at £500. The total amount of £6000 represented a cost of £1000 per event. The indirect costs included postage and stationary (communicating directly with members) at £373, printing and copying the brochure and reports at £552, advertising (noting that most of BLS publicity is free, thanks to the BCA Prospect, and local magazines) at £149, the website at £510, insurance at £209, and the examiner's fee at £290.

The Honorary Treasurer commented that the net result was a surplus of £1342 compared with a deficit of £862 the previous year, and that these results were set to continue bearing in mind that the contribution to the raised seating had now been paid off, and there was no longer any need to hire chairs, and that the bursary to Arts Richmond had expired.

The Honorary Treasurer noted that these healthy results mean that the level of subscription can be maintained for a further season.

Turning to the balance sheet, the Honorary Treasurer noted that cash in the bank totalled £9764, although some of this relates to subscriptions for this year received before the end of last year, thus the net assets total £5368. This includes £4000 kept on deposit.

The Honorary Treasurer thanked the independent examiner, John Forbes, for his assistance with the accounts, noting that his report was included in the treasurer's report.

The Chair invited questions on the report but there were none.

## **7. Adoption of the annual report and 2016/17 accounts**

Adoption was proposed by William Mortimer and seconded by Fiona Smith and passed by a show of hands.

## **8. Approval of the rates of subscription**

The proposal for the current rates of subscription to remain in place for the coming year (£30 for a single membership and £50 for a joint membership) was proposed by Lucy Hine and seconded by Helen Black and approved on a show of hands.

## 9. Election of officers and members of the committee

The Chair began by thanking the retiring members of the committee, Sarah Kearney, Patrick Harvey and the Honorary Secretary, Noel Davison. She noted that Noel's retirement had been received only last week, on grounds of ill health. At this time no replacement was being sought but that current members would cover Noel's duties until such time as a replacement could be found. The Chair noted that Noel had been an exemplary member of the committee 'having a real facility with the written word'.

The Chair introduced two new committee members, Sue Pandit who will replace Patrick as the Honorary Treasurer, and Jo Weinberger as committee member. She noted that Sue has a background in strategic planning and marketing, before changing direction and becoming a teacher, eventually teaching undergraduate and postgraduate courses at the University of Arts London, and Oxford Brookes University. She spent 5 years as Director of the Oxford International Centre for Publishing Studies, and her last job was as Dean of the School of Printing and Publishing at the University of the Arts. Since retiring she has been involved with the Stationers' Company, the livery company for the content and communications industries, and has spent three years helping with the Wimbledon Bookfest.

The Chair also welcomed to the committee Jo Weinberger, a long-time resident of Barnes who has just completed an MA in Shakespeare Studies. She will take on publicity and help with the website.

The Chair proposed that the elections be made en bloc and this was approved. The nominations and proposers and seconders are as follows:

<b>Post</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Secunder</b>
Chair	Jane Skerrett	Elisabeth Morse	Miranda Corben
Vice Chair	David King-Farlow	Diane Morcom	P Kegerreis
Hon. Secretary	Vacant	Vacant	Vacant
Hon. Treasurer	Sue Pandit	Anja de Jager	Brenda Offredi
Committee	Louise Carr	Fina Mason	Annie Beck
Committee	Caroline Kelsall	Val Dixon	Michael Murison
Membership Secretary	Kathy Owles	Elisabeth Morse	Fina Mason
Committee	Jo Weinberger	Fina Mason	Sian Walford

The officers and committee members were proposed by Claire Boyling and seconded by Sarah Kearney and duly elected en bloc on a show of hands.

## 10. Any other business

There was no other business. The Chair commented that the current year was proceeding very well and thanked the members for attending. A member proposed a further thank you to

the out-going Honorary Secretary. This was followed up by a thank you to all the elected members of the committee. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9:45 pm.