

Report and financial statements
Year ended September 30 2017

www.barnesliterarysociety.org.uk

The Barnes Literary Society
Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 September 2017

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Society information

Patrons	Isla Blair Julian Glover Roger McGough Patrick Neate Jan Pieńkowski Fiona Smith
Committee	Jane Skerrett (Chairman) David King-Farlow (Deputy Chairman) Patrick Harvey (Hon. Treasurer) Noel Davison (Hon. Secretary) Sarah Kearney (Membership Secretary) Louise Carr Caroline Kelsall Kathy Owles
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

Annual Report for the year ended September 2017

This has been another successful year for the BLS with a range of excellent speakers and a good turnout for all our events. Novelist Joanna Trollope launched the season with an accomplished talk about one of her latest works, loosely based on Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*, part of a publishing project to mark 200 years since Austen's death in 1817 by reimagining some of her works into the 21st century. Professor Emma Smith, eminent Shakespeare scholar and professor of Shakespeare studies at Oxford University, was our speaker in November with a talk on Shakespeare's *First Folio*. Professor Smith demonstrated beautifully that an academic can deliver knowledge with both authority and humour. This event was to mark the 400th anniversary, in 2016, of the death of Shakespeare.

In January 2017 our event was a talk from ex soldier, Harry Parker, who was blown up by an IED in Afghanistan. His first novel, *Anatomy of a Soldier*, drew directly on his experiences in the military and has been well received. We were very fortunate that the well known broadcaster and OSO ambassador Kate Silverton agreed to interview Harry and because of her own experiences and knowledge brought an added dimension to a lively and informative interview. Harry is a remarkable young man.

February's event was a talk from Jane Hawking, first wife of the physicist Stephen Hawking, about her life with Stephen; the experience of having her memoir turned into fiction; and her own career as a writer. BLS turned to crime for the March talk when crime writer Andrew Taylor mulled over the challenges and delights of writing historical crime fiction. He focused on his recent novel *The Ashes of London* set in the time of the Great Fire of London. His description of the lead melting from the old St Paul's church roof was truly terrifying.

Our final event was an interview with John Simenon, son of the crime writer Georges Simenon. Simenon is a worldwide phenomenon and bestselling author still, many years after his death in 1989. There has been a recent resurgence of interest in the UK in his work arising from the David Hare play *Red Barn* at the National Theatre, based on one of Simenon's stories, and adaptations for television of the Maigret novels with Rowan Atkinson as Maigret. John Simenon is the curator of his father's literary legacy and gave us some fascinating insights into the challenges of being the son of a famous father.

During the season we visited the London Metropolitan Archives in Clerkenwell and Southside House in Wimbledon. Both visits were sold out and the feedback from members who went on the visits was very positive. The finale of the season was a very well supported gin tasting event at the Barnes Green centre in June: gin is the spirit of the moment with a huge choice of new flavours available. Our speaker at the event, author of *101 gins to try before you die* Ian Buxton, was funny and informative. We all came away knowing more about gin than at the start of the evening.

Events such as these take a lot of organising: I would like to thank particularly Louise Carr, who took the lead on the gin tasting event, and her husband Nick for organising all the gin samples, hosting Ian Buxton and, with other committee members, running the bar; Kathy and Peter Owles for co ordinating the production and creation in 24 hours of over 900 canapes; BLS members Kate and Malcolm Warrillow for donations of delicious Fever-Tree mixers; Sarah Kearney for doing the raffle and the whole committee for helping out on the day and making it such a success.

Our final event was a BLS first: in September Joy Rhoades, author of *The Woolgrower's Companion*, held a creative writing class in Rose House for members of BLS. Joy is an enthusiastic and well informed teacher who has taken a major career change to become a writer after life as a Wall Street lawyer. Feedback from those who attended was positive overall and included suggestions for future classes members would like to see BLS organise.

It continues to be a challenge to get good speakers for BLS: the relatively recent spawning of local literary festivals has meant we need to be on our mettle to provide the range and quality of speaker our members expect. But with our combination of excellent speakers and events, membership of BLS offers some of the best value in literary London. I am pleased to confirm we are not proposing to increase the membership fees for the 2018/19 season but this is something which the committee keep under review. Membership fees are our major source of income so it is important that we have a full membership of 320. Membership is renewed each season so every September every adult in Barnes (and the environs if there is room) has the opportunity to join BLS.

I would like to thank our patrons, Isla Blair, Julian Glover, Roger McGough, Patrick Neate, Jan Pieńkowski and Fiona Smith for the interest and support they have given to BLS. We value them greatly.

We are grateful to the Barnes Community Association (BCA) for providing coverage of our events in their monthly magazine Prospect, and to the OSO Arts Centre, Arts Richmond, and the Barnes Bugle for their coverage and to all the local shops, businesses, libraries and organisations which take our publicity. We would like to thank the BCA for organising Societies Day in April 2017 so efficiently. BLS always take a stall at this event as it is such a good way to meet potential new members.

In late 2016 we said a sad farewell to Isla Dawes, proprietor of the Barnes Bookshop, as she sold up in South West London and moved to Derbyshire. Isla has been a wonderful supporter of BLS and a lively and efficient person with whom to work. However change is also an opportunity and we were delighted to welcome Venetia Vyvyan as the new owner of our local bookshop. Venetia has continued to support BLS not only with a regular raffle prize but also by organising the books sales for all our events with speakers. We are very fortunate that she is the new owner and that Barnes continues to have such an excellent independent bookshop.

I would like to thank our terrific sound engineer Alan Trehwitt at AT Sound for his hard work and skill in ensuring the sound quality of our events which is always appreciated by our speakers and audience; the staff, trustees and volunteers at the OSO Arts Centre and the Methodist Church, Barnes Green for their work in helping to make our events a success and Anne Cotgreave of Skinnycat Design for managing our website so efficiently.

I would like to thank my fellow committee members for the work they do and the enthusiasm they bring to the smooth running of BLS.

Thank you too to all our members: BLS could not exist without your support.

Jane Skerrett
Chair
Barnes Literary Society

As described on page 6, you have approved the financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2017 set out on pages 5 and 6. 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', followed by a period.

John Forbes
"Nova Cura"
1 Ibis Lane
London
W4 3UP

The Barnes Literary Society
Income and expenditure account for the year ended 30 September 2017

	2017	2016
INCOME		
Subscriptions	8,171	7,560
Guest fees	418	650
Ticket event fees	2,312	880
Bank interest	2	1
Extraordinary income	170	10
Total	11,073	9,101
EXPENDITURE		
Room Hire	1,383	1,500
Regular events		
-Sound system hire	2,880	3,212
-Speaker fees	1,240	1,363
-Chair Hire	500	496
Special events	1,658	1,050
Printing, stationery & publicity		
-Stationery, postage, PO Box rental	373	372
-Printing, copying	552	505
-Speaker & venue flowers	0	28
-Advertising	136	135
Grants and Bursaries	0	300
Website	510	524
Insurance	209	198
Accountancy	290	290
Bank charges	0	10
Total	9,731	9,963
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,342	(862)
Reserves brought forward at 1 October 2016	4,026	4,888
Funds carried forward at 30 September 2017	5,368	4,026

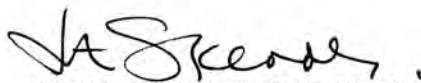
The Barnes Literary Society
Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2017

		2017		2016
Current assets				
Cash at bank - current account	5,745		3,679	
Cash at bank - deposit account	4,019		4,017	
		9,764		7,696
Prepayments		0		50
		9,764		7,746
Creditors				
Accrued expenses	290		290	
Subscriptions in advance	4,106		3,430	
		(4,396)		(3,720)
Net current assets		5,368		4,026
Represented by:				
General reserves		5,368		4,026

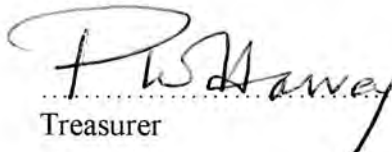
Basis of accounting

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

Approved by the committee on 31 March 2018 and signed on its behalf by



Chairman



Treasurer