

MINUTES OF THE 189th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SHAKESPEARE CLUB OF STRATFORD UPON AVON HELD AT THE SHAKESPEARE CENTRE, HENLEY ST., STRATFORD UPON AVON ON 10th SEPTEMBER 2013.

Approximately 30 members attended.

1. Dr. Susan Brock was elected Chairman of the meeting.
2. Apologies were received from Paul Edmondson, Pat Richardson, Tony and Jenny Grey, Roger Pringle, Daphne Ingram, Helen Hargest.
3. The minutes of the last AGM were circulated at the meeting and accepted as a true record.
4. Matters arising.

4.1 Access to Mason Croft

The Chairman reported a communication from Rebecca White, Administrator for Events and Facilities at Mason Croft, that the Shakespeare Institute was waiting for the University to improve the car park for those with walkers and mobility scooters. The District Council Conservation Officer would not approve the addition of handrails to the front of the building.

4.2 Publicity

The Chairman reported that, unfortunately, there had been problems with the Club web site through the summer. It was administered and hosted by third parties. The Club is planning to take greater control of the site to improve its effectiveness.

4.3 Change of dates of Club meeting:

The Chairman reported that the Committee had considered a request that Club meetings be moved to another week of the month to avoid meeting in the same week as the Hall's Croft Club. It had been decided not to change the traditional timing.

5. Treasurer's report.

The Treasurer submitted her report for the year ended 23rd April 2013:

Membership numbers were maintained but the number of visitors fell from 58 to 45. The cost of lectures had been increased as the fee to speakers had been raised from £50 to £75 the previous year and the mileage allowance increased. Rob Bowen of H.L. Barnes continued to audit the accounts each year free of charge.

The hire of the hall for 2012/13 and public liability insurance remained much the same as last year. Printing and postage costs had been kept

down but, for technical reasons, the cost of maintaining the web site rose substantially. The Committee would address web site maintenance costs during the course of the coming season. Additional funds were raised with the raffle and bar sales and members were encouraged to support these social events.

The Club had not applied to the Town Trust for a grant to extend publicity spending this year as the Club's reserves were too high to qualify. Therefore no flier was produced. However the use of email to contact members with reminders about meetings etc. had been most successful.

The move of the AGM to the September meeting had saved a substantial sum in rent, provision of an entertainment, an additional mailing and will hopefully increase the number of members attending. However at the time of speaking membership renewals for 2013/14 were down, with only 70 members renewing to date.

A member speaking from the floor asked if the reserves were held in an interest-bearing account. The Treasurer reported that it was not but that she would look into it.

The Chair thanked Lady Follett for her comprehensive report and the accounts were approved.

6. Election of President. 2013/14.

The Director of the Shakespeare Institute, Professor Michael Dobson, had been approached to stand as President for the coming season and had agreed. He was elected unanimously. The presidential evening would be on 12 November.

7. Election of Honorary Treasurer.

Lady Follett was proposed as Treasurer of the Club by Susan Brock, seconded by Linda Butland. She was re-elected unanimously.

8. Appointment of Honorary Auditors.

H.L. Barnes and Son were re-elected as Honorary Auditors. Lady Follett would send a letter of thanks.

9. Election of Committee.

Last year's Committee was as follows: Susan Brock, Jean Lawrance, John and Mary Cunnington, Mary Reardon, Eileen Geldard, Lady Deborah Follett, Sylvia Morris, Paul Edmondson. All current committee members were willing to stand again and were re-elected unanimously.

Mrs Janet Anslow was proposed as a Committee member by David Hutchings and seconded by Sir Brian Follett. She was elected unanimously.

11. Report on programme for next season.

The Chairman, on behalf of Mary Reardon, the Programme Secretary, reported on the arrangements for the coming season as follows:

2013

September 10– Dr Paul Prescott

October 8 – Daniel Rosenthal

November 12 – Presidential evening

December 10 – Emily Oliver

2014

January 14 – Erica Whyman

February 11 – Dr Erin Sullivan

March 11 – Professor Jonothan Neelands

April 8 – Nick Walton and Amanda Jenkins

The Chair thanked Ms Reardon for her hard work in putting this excellent programme together.

12. Subscriptions.

Subscriptions would remain the same (£15) for the coming season.

13. Shakespeare Anniversaries

The Chairman reported that two major Shakespeare Anniversaries would occur in the next three years: 2014 was the 450th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth and 2016 the 400th anniversary of his death. The Committee had been in touch with Dr Nick Walton, ISA Secretary, about the 2016 World Shakespeare Congress (WSC) which would be held in London and Stratford, to ensure the Club was kept informed of arrangements.

It had been suggested that there might be a special evening meeting of the Club in April 2016 to mark the anniversary.

Sir Brian Follett reported from the floor that the next WSC Committee meeting was scheduled for 26 September.

David Geldard speaking from the floor suggested that an eye be kept on the costs of any celebration as the reserve was only £3000.

14. AOB

14.1 Raffle

The Chairman reported that the Committee proposed that the Club hold a raffle (of Shakespeare books and bottles) in January 2014.

This proposal was seconded by Linda Butland and approved unanimously. Prizes could be brought in at the November and December meetings.

14.2 Social arrangements

The Chairman reported that the Committee proposed that, for a trial period from October 2013, refreshments should be served before the meeting from 7pm to attract more members and encourage socialising. This proposal was approved unanimously.

Mrs Bellinger speaking from the floor asked that meetings should start earlier, for example 6.30pm. The Committee would consider this proposal. The Chairman reported that Committee members would wear badges to be more visible to new (and old) members of the Club.

14.3 *Pericles* performed by Ketterer's Men

The Chairman drew members' attention to fliers advertising this production at the Shakespeare Institute later in September.

There was a short break before the regular meeting at 7.45: Dr Paul Prescott on *The Life, Adventure and Opinions of Sam Wanamaker*.