



**Minutes of the 37th Annual General Meeting**  
**held virtually as a webinar on Tuesday 12 January 2021 at 7.45p.m.**

**1. Welcome by the President, Miss Susan Hampton.**

As Susan was unable to attend the meeting, her address was read by the chairman, Henry Alpass who then moved on to the rest of the agenda.

'Good evening and welcome to the 37th AGM of the Arts Society Bristol. I am sure we can all agree that the past year did not quite pan out as we had expected - certainly an unprecedented year like no other! Also an unexpected opportunity to improve our IT skills!

Although the last "live" lecture was in March, the programme continued streamed online, thanks to the expertise and skills of Lin Cobb, to whom we are extremely grateful. Her patience and reassurance have been invaluable and will continue to be needed into the foreseeable future.

Our Chairman, Henry, together with Mary, Programme Secretary, are to be congratulated on enabling monthly lectures to continue, albeit in a new format, and enjoyed in comfort at home! I extend my warmest thanks to Henry and his committee for successfully keeping "the show on the road" during these extraordinary times.'

**2. Apologies** - Marion Hill.

**3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on Monday 15th January 2020** (previously circulated online)

Neither matters arising nor amendments had been received. The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting were accepted unanimously by a virtual vote of the membership later in the meeting (see below). A paper copy will be signed by the Chairman and filed with the ASB records.

**4. Chairman's Report**

Henry read the following report to the members.

'Good evening and Happy New Year everyone.

Thank you all for your support throughout this different year. We have been encouraged by your appreciative comments on the lectures. The society owes a great deal to Lin Cobb and to our lecturers for achieving the pivot to digital presentations.

In the Spring we will issue our programme for next year. It will include return to live lectures at the Redmaids' High School as soon as this becomes possible.



would also like at this moment to thank Maureen Dickens and her loyal team of bar tenders who have provided drinks before our live lectures earlier in this season.

We have fingers crossed that the Autumn Tour to Northumberland can go ahead. Sadly Kate Painter who put this together with Stella Berkeley is unwell, so we need two people to lead the visit. I will be contacting all those who signed up for the visit just to explain in further detail.

Church Recording and Heritage Volunteering will resume as soon as access is allowed again.

Susan Merelie has arranged financial support for a school to participate in the Shakespeare Schools project and other Young Arts projects will go ahead as soon as possible.

We plan to arrange study day tours when it becomes safe to do so.

Finally fresh faces are welcome on your committee. Many of us are carrying out more than one role and several are due to step down next year. We need to co-opt new members please during the year to assist the transfer of skills. Please speak to one of us, if you would like to help run the society. It has certainly been fun this year and we have hopefully learned some new skills!

Please keep referring to our website. It has become an ever more important means of keeping in touch.

I am now pleased to ask **Stella Victory** to present the audited accounts for the year to the end of June 2020.'

## **5. Treasurers Report for the year ended 30th June 2020**

'Good evening everyone. Thank you for joining the AGM.

The events of the past 9 months have radically changed the way we deliver lectures, and that, in turn, has been reflected in the finances of the ASB. It therefore seems appropriate to step back for a moment to look at an overview of a 3 year period from 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2022.

For the year to 30 June 2020, we unexpectedly had a surplus of over £3,000.

For the current year to 30 June 2021, we will probably break even.

For the subsequent year to 30 June 2022, we may have a deficit of up to £5,000.

However we started with high reserves at 1 July 2019, therefore taking the three years together we should be able to cope without raising subscriptions.



By January next year I hope that we will have a clearer picture of how we will deliver lectures in future, and how many members we are likely to have. At that stage I hope that we will be better placed to see whether we may need to raise subscriptions for the year 2022-23.'

To turn to specifics:

(The Signed Accounts for the year to 30 June 2020 were displayed on the screen)

'I hope that you can see on your screen the signed accounts for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Looking at Income on the left (under the column headed 2020):

The main sources are subscriptions and Gift Aid. These were received before the pandemic struck. Whilst they are slightly lower than the previous year as our membership numbers had declined, they were relatively unaffected by the lockdown. Other items are relatively minor.

Looking at Expenditure on the right (again under the column headed 2020):

The main items are:

Speakers' fees and travel expenses

The hire of meeting rooms for the lectures

The Affiliation fee to The Arts Society, and

Administrative costs, mainly postage and publicity

In 2020, due to the lockdown, we had to cease all activities for the period from mid-March to 30 June. Consequently, for 3 months, we did not incur lecture room costs or most of the lecturers' fees. Therefore, our main costs for the year were significantly lower than expected.

As normal, we supported Young Arts, and are again very grateful to Peter Stoppard for a generous contribution of £100 towards Young Arts activities.

The overall result for the year to 30 June 2020 is therefore a surplus of £3,274.

Looking at the balance sheet at the bottom of the page:

We started the year at 1 July 2019 with relatively high reserves of £17,592.

By 30 June 2020, the surplus for the year had increased our reserves to £20,866.'



(The Forecast for 2020-21 was displayed on the screen)

'Now I want to turn to the current year to 30 June 2021 and I hope that on your screens you can see my forecast.

I had originally expected that we would have a deficit for this year.

However, despite adding extra lectures to make up for those cancelled the previous year, the cost of delivering lectures electronically is lower than delivering them face to face. We incur lecturers' fees, but not their travel expenses, nor lecture room hire costs, which are significant.

Against that, we have lost a number of members so we have received lower income from subscriptions, though we are very glad to welcome a few new members who have joined recently.

The net effect will probably be that for the current year we will approximately break even.

I therefore anticipate that at 30 June this year we will still have reserves in excess of £20,000

Looking ahead to 2021-22

We do hope that we will be able to return to lectures at Redmaids High.

If so, we will revert to incurring room hire costs for the lectures and the travel expenses for the lecturers, so our costs will rise back to their normal level, or perhaps higher due to inflation.

Membership numbers, and therefore income, is difficult to predict, but we hope that a number of previous members who did not want to participate in electronic lectures will rejoin ASB when we return to delivering lectures face-to-face.

Assuming that we have around 200 members I anticipate our deficit may be up to £5,000.

That sounds huge, but our reserves are more than adequate to cover it, and still have the recommended cushion left over to cover any more unexpected eventualities.

I am extremely grateful to Barry Wilkinson for having acted as our Independent Examiner for the year to 30 June 2020. He has very kindly agreed to act as Independent Examiner for the year to 30 June 2021.'



We will need to ask you to vote to accept the signed accounts for the year to 30 June 2020 and to appoint the External Examiner, but we will deal with all the votes together at the end of the meeting.

Stella then asked if there had been any questions from the members via chat Lin Cobb replied that no questions had arisen which had not already been answered in Stella's report.

Henry thanked Stella for her hard work producing the accounts which indicate we are fortunately still in a healthy position.

## **6. Election of Committee Members (Trustees)**

Henry reported that no election of committee members was needed this year as no one was due to retire. Unfortunately, no one has offered to come on to the committee which is something we need to address urgently. Henry was very pleased that Hilary Williams has volunteered to help Lin Cobb to run the virtual meetings by masterminding the Zoom system. Things can be explained to any other members who would like to join the committee. This is something we are very keen to achieve during this year. Committee members are contactable by the e mails on the back of the lecture card for this year or via the website. The committee members have all very kindly offered to continue in service which is much appreciated.

## **7. Consideration of any resolutions duly proposed and seconded**

Henry declared that sufficient members had joined the virtual meeting to constitute a quorum. (There were 117 'unique viewers'. As many members may share a screen, the number present may have been much higher. As per the Constitution of the ASB resolutions were passed or declined by a simple majority. )

### **The following resolutions were put before the members.**

1. The Committee recommends that the AGM minutes from January 14th 2020 are approved.

Proposer: Jim Victory, Seconder: Martin Woodhead

The resolution was unanimously approved by the members.



2. The Committee recommends that Barry Wilkinson be appointed to the position of Independent Examiner for the year ending 30 June 2021.

Proposer: Dilys Farrant, Seconder: Ann Herring

The resolution was unanimously approved by the members.

3. The Committee recommends that the signed accounts for the year ended 30 June 2020 be adopted by the society.

Proposer: Anne Davies, Seconder: Anne Woodhead

The resolution was approved by the members with one abstention.

There were no further resolutions put forward although prior notice of this meeting was given.

### **8. Any Other Business**

As there was no other business, the Chairman thanked all those present for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.01 p.m

**The 2022 AGM will be held on Tuesday January 11th 2022 at 7.30 pm**