



Minutes of the 41st Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 24th September 2016 at The Exchange, Sturminster Newton

1. President's Welcome

The President, Sir Mervyn Medlycott, opened the meeting at 3.35 pm and welcomed the 46 members who were present.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Lin Hoddinott, Vicki & Stewart Owers, Ann-Marie & Steve Wilkinson, Barry Brock, Patricia Spencer, Angela McDonald, Dorothy Bower, Amanda Dooley and Iain Swinnerton.

3. Minutes of the 40th AGM held on 19th September 2015 at Yeovil

The minutes having been circulated, were passed unanimously.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Chairman's Report – Ann-Marie Wilkinson

I'm sorry that I cannot be at this year's AGM. Steve and I are currently on holiday in Canada so I have asked Ted Udall to read out my report. As usual we have had a very busy year and I thank all the volunteers who have freely given of their time to help the society, from those who make the tea and coffee and put out the chairs at our local group meetings to those who take on the more prominent jobs in the society. At this AGM we are saying goodbye to one of the more visual volunteers, Barry Brock our Research Centre Manager. Barry has been running the centre for 5 years and now feels that he wants some more free time. He has seen us through some difficult times, especially when we had the water through the roof and has been dealing with the repairs for a couple of years. We wish him well.

We still need to keep a tight rein on our finances as the society membership continues to drop. This is not only a problem which affects our society. All family history societies seem to have the same problem. However, I would like to thank all those involved in generating income and keeping our expenditure under control. The lease of the Research Centre comes up for renewal soon and we are looking at all our options for the future.

Our publications continue to sell. This year's best seller has been the CD or memory stick containing 40 years of the Greenwood Tree. We have finally managed to sort out the problems we had with getting the Dorset Monumental Inscriptions onto FindmyPast and are hopeful that they will appear online in the next couple of months. We have a regular income from FindmyPast and are hoping to generate more by adding more parishes and possibly other projects.

Another source of income is easyfundraising. If you shop online then I urge you to sign up to this. It provides a portal to many suppliers on the internet (Amazon, Sainsburys, Marks and Spencer, Easy Jet Holidays to name a few). Last time I looked we had raised over £100 without doing anything. You can find the link on our website or talk to our website manager, Patricia. Even if you only shop online occasionally as the supermarket says "every little helps".

Sherborne has continues to run a programme of regular events, details of which can be found on the website and in the Greenwood Tree. These bring income and people into the centre and are interesting and enjoyable. Thank you to all those involved in the organisation. A Photographic Project has been launched which aims to set up a searchable database of named people from our two counties.

Again we did not go to “Who Do You Think You Are? LIVE” at the NEC in Birmingham. We have been unable to justify the expense due to the state of our finances. I know that other societies are also considering whether to attend in future as it is not a profit making activity. We have never taken enough money to cover our costs let alone make any profit.

Patricia and her team have been busy during the year working on the website. In addition to our Facebook page, we now have a rapidly growing Facebook Group. We also have a presence on twitter. Check them out if you use social media.

This year we have been saddened by the deaths of Patrick Williams a former chairman of the society and Val Andrew who along with her late husband Ken was a stalwart of the East Dorset Group and was responsible for the Dorset Marriage Index.

I would like to thank everyone involved in the society for their hard work during the year - all those who give up their time to help the Society in various ways too numerous to mention. I would also like to thank Jacqui and her small team from Blackmore Vale group who have organised this AGM.

6. Treasurer’s Report – Rose Figgins

As you all would have seen from the abridged accounts circulated with the August Greenwood Tree, we made a profit again in 2015; £8,412 to be precise.

To summarise the accounts briefly, our income at £64,133 was slightly less than that of 2014. Income from subscriptions fell by £1.8K; society services by £1.6K, however, gift aid on subscriptions rose by £2.2K, and books by £1.6.

On the expenditure side, at a total of £55.7k, we appear to have spent overall just over £4.5k more in 2015 than 2014. This, however, is not strictly speaking the case as the 2014 figures were distorted by the revaluation, at £6.5K, of the library. In reality, our expenditure on admin & depreciation is only approximately £2k more than last year; due for instance to increases in such things as insurance, water rates, electricity and depreciation. The production costs of the Greenwood Tree fell by £1k, and books and publications were down by .5K. Society services, group funding and governance costs were all up slightly.

On the balance sheet side, we spent £5.5k of our restricted funds (namely, the David Chant bequest) on the purchase of new computers for the Centre. We also utilised just under £1k of the Gillian Kerr bequest to fund further improvements to our website installing our on line shop, which has proved very successful. The net result of the additions to our fixed assets, together with the annual profit has resulted in an increase of nearly £8.5k to our Capital Fund, which a healthy position to be in. I might add, we are also optimistic of making a small profit again in 2016.

Looking to the future, we do have challenges ahead maintaining the Society at this level in the face of falling members and the Executive committee is currently engaged in drawing up a strategy to take us forward for the next ten to fifteen years.

I would like to add that a full copy of the accounts has been posted on our website, and I do have some paper copies with me if anybody would like to peruse them after the meeting.

Proposer: Jane Ferentzi-Sheppard. Seconder: Judy Hodges **carried unanimously**.

7. Appointment of Examiners

The Treasurer proposed that Mr Malvern Carvell of Milborne Port should continue to be the Examiner. Seconded by John Tanner and **carried unanimously**.

8. Election of Officers and Executive Committee

Chairman: Ann-Marie Wilkinson
Vice Chairman (Somerset): **No nomination**
Vice Chairman (Dorset): Jennie McGowan
Treasurer: Rose Figgins
Secretary: Ted Udall
Executive Committee

a) Groups

Blackmore Vale:	Jacqui Wragg	East Dorset:	John Damon
South Dorset:	Jennie McGowan	West Dorset:	Sylvia Creed-Castle
Mid Somerset:	Peter Welch	West Somerset:	Jane Sharp
Taunton:	David Brown	Yeovil:	Ted Udall

Sub-Committee members (not elsewhere shown):

Editor	Bob Barber
Webmaster	Patricia Spencer
H & S Rep	John Brooking

The above named being willing to continue in post and there being no other nominations, it was proposed by Sue Burne and seconded by Colin Dean that they continue for a further year. **Carried unanimously**

9. Nominations for Vice presidents and Life Members

Vice Presidents: David Hawkings, Terry Farmer, Colin Dean, John Howick
There were no further nominations.

Life members:

Alan Brown
Florence Chuk
Miss M E Holmes
Murial Monk
Bob Steed
Iain Swinnerton

Note1: Val Andrew and Betty Nineham passed away within the past year.

Note 2: there was some discussion about Miss Holmes – Judith Bennett promised to investigate.

The following nominations were received for Life Membership: John Boys (a founder-member and former treasurer of East Dorset group) was proposed by John Tanner and seconded by Colin Dean; Brian Webber (long-time member of West Dorset group) was proposed by Jane Ferentzi-Sheppard and seconded by Sylvia Creed-Castle. They were **unanimously approved** by the members.

10. Closure of Business

The meeting closed at 4.00

Next AGM at The Memorial Hall, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Taunton on 23rd Sep 2017

Signed: Dated: