



North West Kent Family History Society

(Covering N W Kent and ancient Kent parishes now S E London)

Minutes of the 41st Annual General Meeting Held at Cobham Hall, Cobham, Kent DA12 3BL

Thursday 11 April 2019 at 12 noon

Present:

David Cufley, President and 104 members and 7 visitors.

Minutes Secretary: Stella Eames

David Cufley, Chair of the Meeting, welcomed members.

1. Notice Convening the Meeting

Stella Eames, Minutes Secretary, read the notice convening the meeting. The meeting was then declared open.

2. Apologies

Christina Barnett, Caroline Blackett, Eileen Eves, Walter Eves, Derek Honour, Brian Kirk, Janet Thorne, David Turner, Mike Weeks.

3. Minutes of the 40th Annual General Meeting (copies available on the website and distributed on arrival to all AGM attendees)

David Cufley asked if there were any corrections, there was no response. So he asked for a show of hands to accept the minutes, which were approved unanimously. All in favour, none against, one abstention.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes of 2018 AGM

David Cufley asked if any members wished to raise any matters from the previous minutes. None did.

5. Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2018

A copy of the abbreviated accounts had been distributed on arrival at the venue.

Pat Gooding, Treasurer, said she was pleased that in 2018 there had been a surplus of income over expenditure. It was not as big as 2017's surplus but that was because 2017's income had been boosted by funds from Tunbridge Wells FHS; and extra outlay in 2018 had been incurred by using Farringtons School for the AGM as the Society incurred a hire fee.

Pat paid tribute to Victor Nutt, Workshop Organiser, as donations from those attending workshops had made a significant contribution to Society income.

Pat reminded members that the Society benefits from Gift Aid and asked all UK taxpayers to sign a gift aid form.

She also asked members to consider paying their annual subscriptions by standing order. This greatly assists our volunteer Membership and Renewals Secretaries. A standing order is not like a direct debit where the Originator (collecting company) can change the amount.

David Cufley asked if any members had any questions for Pat.

Ken Moore asked why the interest received by the Society is so low, given the balances quoted in the accounts. Pat Gooding explained that interest rates are currently abysmally low and also that banks will not give societies even the low rates available for personal customers. In fact, many banks don't like operating Charity accounts at all.

Hilary Waters proposed a vote of thanks to Pat; said that, as a treasurer herself, of a smaller organisation, she knows just how much work is involved, which others might not realise.

Acceptance of the Accounts

As there were no further questions, David Cufley asked members to approve the accounts. Janet Rose proposed and Joyce Hoad seconded and a show of hands approved the accounts unanimously. All in favour, none against, no abstentions.

6. Report of the Committee for 2018 (additionally reports from committee members are on the website)

Tony Codling, the Chairman, presented the report.

Tony spoke about the many achievements of the Society in 2018 and thanked everyone whose volunteer work had made the Society such a success.

There were no questions from members regarding the report.

Janet Rose proposed a vote of thanks to Tony for his leadership of the Society during the past year.

7. Josephine Birchenough Memorial Awards

The President's Panel judges the applications. The panel comprises the President, the Vice Presidents, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

The awards criteria are for three categories: -

Category 1: Projects

The panel received no applications in 2018 for this category. Feedback from some members indicated that it would be better if applications for this category could be made at any time of year. This has been discussed with the Trustees and it has been agreed from 2019.

Category 2: Journal Articles

All published articles in the Journal in 2018 are considered; it is not necessary to apply. Ineligible articles are by Society Trustees, the Editor, members of the President's Panel and non NWKFHS members are not considered.

Category 3: To recognise or support significant work which contributes to the Society and its objects.

Any two members, a proposer and seconder, can submit recommendations to the Trustees or the President's Panel. The Trustees forwarded a number of candidates to receive Thank You Certificates under this award.

This year the panel considered an interesting selection of articles in the **category 2 award**.

There were 32 articles in total in 2018, but only 13 were eligible, the others were by Trustees or the Presidents panel. The panel considered them under the criteria.

- 1 An interesting read.
- 2 Method: how research was approached and the steps taken to discover the information.
- 3 Sources: exact references and where the sources are located.
- 4 Demonstrate how the information is confirmed.
- 5 Problems: how they are overcome and commenting on pitfalls found.
- 6 Draw simple family tree(s) by hand or with computer programs to illustrate the family.
This year the category was extended to include diagrams.

It was finally decided to make four awards and two commendations.

The commendations are for:

Nigel Durrant 'Scene through the lens ...of time' in Vol 14 no 111 page 466; and

Michael Austin 'Uncle Charlie's Revelation' in Vol 14 no 9 page 376.

There are two equal third place awards this year, which go to the following authors:

Linda Thomas for her article 'As poor as a stockinger' in Vol 14 no 12 page 516.

Carolyn Sekulowicz-Barclay for her article 'William Bigg Barclay 1825-1900'

The panel has awarded £25 to each of these two authors.

Second place this year is awarded to:

Pam Goddard for her articles 'Need help to find them? New Zealand Part 1' Vol 14 no 10 page 423 and 'Family moved to New Zealand? Need help to find them? Part 2'. Vol 14 no 12 page 528.

The panel has awarded £40 to Pam Goddard.

The first place award this year goes to Barrie Kirk for his two articles 'Tracing a cousin at Trafalgar, George Kirk baptised 12782, Part 1' Vol 14 no 11 page 455 and 'Part 2' Vol 14 no 12 page 509.

The panel agreed to award Barrie Kirk £60 for the two articles.

To the award winners we send our congratulations on their work, which we are sure Josephine Birchenough would have echoed. And many thanks to everyone whose articles make our Journal such an interesting read.

Certificates of Thanks, Category 3

These were awarded to:

Brian and Rosemary Lathey who both attend and help at all three branch meetings.

Caroline Blackett who has been part of the Bromley meetings for many years and has run the Queries section of the Journal for many years.

Victor Nutt who has organised many workshops and discussion groups which provide education into family history research.

Barbara Phillips who has helped organise and run events for the Society, showcasing NWKFHS in the family history community. She previously organised the bookstalls at branches. Barbara continues to lead the Publications and Projects team.

Barbara Attwaters who has helped organise and run events for the Society and leads the team which organise our AGMs. She retires as Events Organiser after the 2019 AGM. Barbara continues to Chair the Sevenoaks Branch Committee.

Stella Nicholls has attended the Dartford meetings and was a member of the Dartford Villages House Group. She managed the Tape Library for many years and has run the exchange journal table at Dartford for many years.

David Cufley explained that this year a non-member has been proposed for a 'Thank You certificate. This is **Martin Dix** who was the caretaker of the Sevenoaks Community centre for many years and helped the Sevenoaks Branch by setting up the hall and organising the audio equipment. He is a kind and helpful man who even turned up in emergencies in his own time to assist. This certificate will be presented to him by Barbara Attwaters at the last Community Centre meeting before the move to Otford.

8. **Honorary Members**

There were no new honorary members elected this year.

9. **President and Vice Presidents**

The President and Vice Presidents are appointed by the trustees for four years and are all still current. Tony Codling thanked them for their help, advice and guidance.

10. **Election of Chair**

Tony Codling was proposed by Victor Nutt and seconded by Janet Rose. He was unanimously elected. None against, no abstentions.

11. **Election of Vice Chair**

Mike Weeks was proposed by Cliff Scottow and seconded by Lorraine King. He was unanimously elected. None against, no abstentions. Mike Weeks was also willing to take on the duties of Publicity Officer.

12. **Election of Secretary**

This position is still vacant and no nominations had been received. David Cufley appealed for nominations from the floor. Asked anyone interested to see Tony Codling. Explained that the lack of a secretary means that other officers have to do more work to maintain the Society.

13. **Election of Treasurer**

Pat Gooding was proposed by Judith French and seconded by Raymer Lofts. She was elected unanimously. None against, no abstentions.

14. **Election of Other Committee Members**

Janet Rose, Librarian proposed by David Cufley, seconded by Richard Flynn.

Barbara Phillips, Chair, Publications and Projects subcommittee proposed by David Turner seconded by Lorraine King.

Barbara Attwaters proposed by Judith French seconded by Cliff Scottow.

Fran Rogers proposed by Trevor Allan and seconded by David Turner.

Victor Nutt proposed by Susan Brushett seconded by Joyce Bullard

The meeting elected the committee members unanimously. All in favour, none against. No abstentions.

The Chair explained that the individual branches elected their Branch Representatives and these people would form, with the above elected members, the Society Committee.

The committee is also made up with two ex-officio members, this the Chair explained means they are full members of the Society Committee by the jobs they undertake on behalf of the Society and that they are Trustees.

Pauline Heathcote was confirmed as Journal Editor, ex-officio.

David Cufley explained that Christina Barnett was not at the meeting because of the sudden death of her husband Bob Barnett. Christina has confirmed she is willing to continue as Membership Secretary, ex-officio.

15. Election/Appointment of Independent Examiner.

David Cufley explained that the constitution allows the election or appointment of an Independent Examiner (clause 9.8). This role is becoming more complex so the Trustees have agreed the appointment of a company to fulfil this role, quotations having been obtained by the Treasurer.

Berach Administration Ltd had agreed to be the Independent Examiner going forward and was proposed by Pat Gooding and seconded by Tony Codling.

The members unanimously appointed Berach Administration Ltd the Independent Examiner. None against, no abstentions.

16. Resolution to change the Constitution; proposals circulated with the Agenda

David Cufley explained that the existing Constitution only included ordinary, family and honorary members, whereas we also have Libraries, which are members. Therefore the proposed amendments are necessary to regularise the position and because the new website has a Members Only Area and the rights of this fourth membership category needed to be agreed.

Proposed Clause 3.1 change to four types of membership

All in favour, none against, no abstentions.

Proposed Clause 3.1.1.1 change of title from 'Ordinary' to 'Individual' membership

All in favour, none against, no abstentions.

Proposed Clause 3.1.4 New clause the introduction of Associate or Library membership.

It was asked from the floor how many library members the Society has and what subs they pay.

David Cufley said there are 10 – 12 and they pay £12.

All in favour, none against, no abstentions.

Proposed Clause 4.3 the Honorary members' rights.

All in favour, none against, no abstentions.

Proposed Clause 7.4.1 Association or Library members attendance at meetings.

Sheila Elisak said that normally visitors to branch meetings are asked to join after one meeting or at most one more meeting meaning after two meetings maximum. So why are Library representatives offered three meetings before being asked to pay an ordinary membership subs? This appears to discriminate against other visitors.

David Cufley answered that three meetings was inserted to allow for one attendance at each of the branch meetings.

Susan Pittman asked how the branches would know whether a visitor or library representative had already attended another branch meeting?

It is accepted that they probably wouldn't as it's difficult to communicate this information between Branches.

Pauline Heathcote said that she is often on the reception desk at Dartford and there are usually less than 5 visitors per meeting.

Sue Durrant asked how visitors are monitored, as it is possible to enter via another entrance.

David Cufley said that most people are recognised and would be asked to pay a subscription if they are a returning non-member / visitor.

Susan Pittman asked if we are really expecting to be overwhelmed?

David Cufley explained that we must have clear rules to avoid complaints and protect the trustees and the committee. There had been an incident in an earlier year where part of the constitution had turned out not to be completely clear and this had led to a time consuming complaint.

Trevor Allan proposed that the clause be altered from 3 meetings to 1 and Janet Rose seconded that.

Pauline Heathcote felt that Libraries mainly join to receive the Journal and probably won't send representatives to meetings anyway, and proposed it was unnecessary to change the drafted clause.

Victor Nutt felt that the wording should be left as proposed because there is a difference in that Library representatives have had a subscription paid by the Library whereas visitors have paid no subs at all. David Cufley said the revised constitution would not be effected until the next subscription year 1st January 2020 so current subscriptions are unaffected.

David Cufley asked the meeting to vote by show of hands on the proposed change as recommended by the Trustees. He said if that vote was not passed then we would vote on the amendment proposed by Trevor Allan and Janet Rose.

12 against

8 abstained

Therefore the show of hands was 85 as there are 105 members present. Original proposal passed.

David Cufley suggested that the next four changes be voted together as they refer to the previous changes agreed. The meeting agreed.

Proposed Clause 7.4 refers to meetings open to all Individual, Family and Honorary members

Proposed Clause 8.1.1.1 refers to change in section 3

Proposed Clause 8.2.4 refers to change in section 3

Proposed Clause 8.3.1 refers to change in section 3

The meeting then voted and passed these changes, all in favour, none against, no abstentions.

David Cufley thanked the subcommittee that had reviewed the constitution, which had been formed with himself as Chair, Tony Codling – Society Chair, Mike Weeks – Society Vice Chair, Joyce Hoad and Walter Eves, both Society Vice Presidents. David can now forward the approved amended constitution to the Charity Commission.

17. Any other business

Trevor Allan asked if the Society was formally protesting about the very poor rate of interest on offer to societies and small charities by banks. Are we voicing it to the Charity Commission and the FFHS to take up?

David Cufley replied that he is the Society's Representative to the FFHS. He raises what the trustees ask him to raise and we can ask the Federation to intervene. Referred back to Executive Committee for their instruction for the next Federation meeting in March 2020.

There being no other business, David Cufley closed the meeting by thanking the Executive Committee, branch committees, the library committee and all other taskholders for making our Society one of the best.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1.20pm.