

The Bibliographical Society

The Annual General Meeting 2021

The one hundred and twenty-ninth Annual General Meeting was held online via Zoom on Tuesday, 19 October 2021. The President, Professor James Raven, was in the Chair. The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting (which had been printed in *The Library* for June 2021) were taken as read, seconded by Mr Linenthal and confirmed.

The President referred to the Annual Report which had been circulated and expressed his enormous thanks to all members of Council and others who helped to keep the Society's meetings and events going in unprecedented circumstances. He thanked the Hon. Secretary in particular for organising and managing all of the Society's events over the past year.

Despite the restrictions on meeting in person, the Society held a full season of very successful online events throughout the year which attracted large audiences. The Society also arranged a virtual winter visit to three libraries in Mexico: the National Library of Mexico, the National Library of Anthropology and History, and the Francisco de Burgoa Library. The virtual summer visit took the Society to three libraries in Australia: the State Library of Victoria, the Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne, and Monash University Library. The President drew attention to the Society's most recent publication, Charles Benson, *The Dublin Book Trade 1801-1850*, London, The Bibliographical Society, 2021.

The President highlighted the opportunities virtual events have brought for the Society, including the ability to bring together large audiences from different countries around the world and enable more members to participate in the Society's events than ever before. He confirmed that the Society plans to move to hybrid events once meetings in person at the Society of Antiquaries become possible again. All events will be live-streamed and, where possible, also recorded. As has become common practice throughout the pandemic, members will be informed of arrangements before each meeting by email and on the Society's website.

The President noted with regret the deaths of Mr A. R. Heath; Mr E. H. Milligan; Mr M. R. Perkin; Ms Jean Tsushima. He then proposed the adoption of the Annual Report for 2020-2021 as circulated in advance of the Annual General Meeting. It was seconded by Dr David Shaw and carried.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the Accounts for 2020. He thanked Mr Richard Linenthal, former Hon. Treasurer, for his help in handing over the accounts in exceptionally difficult circumstances.

The Accounts were published with the Annual Report and follow the same pattern as they have done for several years. Following advice from the Charity Commission, the Society has once again had the accounts examined by an independent examiner and has not had them formally audited. In general terms the accounts for 2020 represent a drop in income, but the Society is still in a strong position and able to maintain and continue its programme of publishing its quarterly journal and bibliographical monographs, funding electronic publications and giving annual research awards and support for special projects.

The figures show a 20% drop in subscription income from the previous year (2019: c.£25,000; 2020: £20,000). However this is largely explained by the resolution of an accounting issue that needed to be compensated for. In practice, the subscription figure remains largely in line with previous years. Investment income decreased from about £41,000 in 2019 to £32,000 in 2020. However, income from OUP for electronic sales of the journal increased slightly to £74,000 (from £72,000). For many years this income has been an enormous benefit to the Society, but for good order's sake Council reminds itself that it would be unwise to take it for granted, and our financial commitments are judged accordingly and conservatively.

As far as expenditure goes, the permanent endowment fund has continued to support bibliographical research allowing us to give away some £10,000 in the form of both major and minor awards, and conference subventions. Again, this was an inevitably reduced figure owing to the fact that many awards could not be taken up because of the pandemic. The costs of publishing the quarterly journal were lower than in the previous year, and expenditure on other publications was confined to support of electronic resources. There are currently ample reserved funds to support future publications. Details are included in the 'Review of the Year' that precedes the annual accounts.

This is the general overview of the accounts for the year 2020. It was of course a year of unprecedented difficulty, which inevitably had an impact on the Society as it did on everyone. In line with contraction in the UK and world equity markets the Society's investments have suffered. So too our overall income. We are in a fortunate position, though, to live well within our means. At the end of 2020 we amalgamated our investment funds into one portfolio managed by Cazenove, and it is encouraging to see that this, and the growth in the markets, has led to promising signs over the last few months.

The Hon. Treasurer proposed the adoption of the Annual Accounts for 2020. This was formally seconded by Ms Margaret Lane Ford. The Hon. Treasurer proposed the appointment of Thornton Springer as the Society's examiners for the year 2021. This was formally seconded by Professor David McKitterick.

The President explained that, owing to the slightly amended rules of rotation, two members of Council will rotate off this year. The retiring members of Council are Dr Mark Byford and Dr Julia Walworth. The President thanked Dr Walworth in particular for her work as secretary of the Publications Sub-Committee and Dr Byford for his role in organising some of the Society's recent additional events and for serving on the Libraries at Risk Sub-Committee. The two new candidates nominated for Council are Dr Justin Croft and Mr Daryl Green. These nominations were formally seconded by Professor Mirjam Foot and approved.

The President confirmed that the Hon. Secretary was willing to serve another one-year term and thanked her for all her work for the Society over the past year. The election of the Hon. Secretary was proposed, seconded by Mr Barry McKay and carried.

The President confirmed that the Hon. Treasurer was willing to serve another one-year term and thanked him for his work for the Society over the past year. The election of the Hon. Treasurer was proposed, seconded by Dr Eric Nye and carried.

There was no other business on this occasion.

After the formal business of the Annual General Meeting, the President introduced Dr Nil Palabiyik who delivered a lecture on *The Mad, the Bad and the Silenced: Three Tales about Ottoman Learning and Renaissance Book Culture*. The lecture was followed by questions and bibliographical socialising.

Karen Limper-Herz, Hon. Secretary, October 2021