

The Chapels Society ~ Minutes of the 27th Annual General Meeting

- 1) The 27th Annual General Meeting of the Chapels Society took place in the Churches of Christ, Christians Meeting House, Oxford Street, Loughborough. The President, Tim Grass, took the chair at 1.00pm and called the meeting to order. Apologies for absence had been received from Jenny Freeman, David Oldham, David Dawson, Alan Rose, M G Jones, John Dearing and Christopher Buckwell.
- 2) The President asked if there were any corrections or amendments to the minutes of the 26th Annual General Meeting held in Union Chapel, Islington, London on 12th July 2014. As no revisions were required, the adoption of the minutes was unanimously agreed by the meeting and they were duly signed by the President as a correct record.
- 3) The President (Tim Grass) noted that the Annual Report was a fulsome record of the Society's activities during the year, which he did not need to elaborate on, though he called particular attention to the series of very successful visits. He also alerted the membership to a couple of very promising upcoming conferences – one on memorialising the First World War in to be run in partnership with the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries and a second with the Ecclesiological Society at a later date. Further details of these events will be made available in due course.

The Secretary (Sara Crofts) reported that the new 'Chapel of the Month' feature on the website had been launched and had already covered a range of buildings. Council members and one or two others had very helpfully contributed articles but she encouraged members to contact her with their suggestions. All that is needed is a brief text (300 words) and a couple of photographs. She noted that she had also been kept busy fielding the usual enquiries from a variety of sources and forwarding casework to Michael Atkinson, the Casework Co-ordinator. She commented that Michael's architectural expertise was hugely valued as he was able to deal robustly and effectively with the increasing number of listed building consent applications and designation applications that are now notified to us.

The Editor (Chris Skidmore) reported that he is currently working on the second *Journal* and has five interesting articles in the pipeline covering a variety of topics. He also drew members' attention to a recent issue with the *Newsletter* in that he had been short of material on a number of occasions. Various Council members had stepped into the breach but he made a plea for the membership to pass on snippets of news and to consider contributing articles. Robin Phillips suggested that the Wesley Memorial Chapel in Oxford might be a potential subject or source of material.

The Treasurer (Jean West) reported on the state of Society's finances, which remain healthy especially as the visits programme continues to produce a modest surplus. The Gift Aid claim figure has returned to normal levels now that there is a regular claims procedure in place. She also noted that some of the Society's reserves had been moved to a different COIF account with a view to obtaining a better rate of interest. The outcome of this decision will be monitored by the Council.

The President then commended the Society's *Annual Report and Accounts 2014* to the AGM. As there were no questions, the adoption of the *Annual Report and Accounts 2014* was proposed by Chris Skidmore, seconded by Robin Phillips and agreed nem con, although it was noted by Roger Holden that there was a typographical error in the accounts where they are shown with the wrong date at the top right on page four.

- 4) Membership rates are kept under review by the Council but it was noted that there is no need for an increase at the present time. The number of members of the Society remains fairly stable although there is a need to continue to try to recruit new members.
- 5) The President noted that although the post of Visits Secretary has been vacant for a couple of years a nomination – Judith Bartlett – had been received this year. He also informed the membership that Sara Crofts would be standing down from the role of Secretary due to a change in her employment, though she would continue to look after the Society's website. Tim Grass expressed grateful thanks to Sara for her hard work and careful stewardship of the Society's records. The Society's other Honorary Officers were willing to stand for re-election as follows:

- Treasurer: Jean West – proposed by Michael Atkinson, seconded by Rod Ambler
- Editor: Chris Skidmore – proposed by Peter Ackers, seconded by Sara Crofts

One nomination for the post of Visits Secretary had been received:

- Hon Visits Secretary: Judith Bartlett – proposed by Sara Crofts, seconded by Tim Grass

The President invited Judith Bartlett to introduce herself to the membership and then the Society's Honorary Officers were elected unanimously en bloc with no objections or abstentions.

The Society currently has six elected members of Council each serving three-year terms. The President noted that one Council member – David Quick – was due to stand down this year. Michael Atkinson and Rod Ambler had reached the end of their first term but were eligible to stand for a second term. Current Council members willing to continue serving were therefore as follows:

- Alan Rose (until 2016)
- Peter Ackers (until 2016 and then eligible for re-election)
- Jenny Freeman (until 2016 and then eligible for re-election)

Current Council members eligible and willing to stand for re-election were as follows:

- Rod Ambler – proposed by Chris Skidmore, seconded by Paul Gardner
- Michael Atkinson – proposed by Alan Rose, seconded by Jean West

The President noted that there was one nomination for a new Council member and invited Stuart Leadley to introduce himself to the membership.

Nominations for election to the Council:

- Stuart Leadley – proposed by Chris Skidmore, seconded by Chris Wakeling

All Council members standing for election and re-election were elected unanimously en bloc with no objections or abstentions.

The President noted that Paul Gardner currently attends meetings of the Chapels Society's Council in his capacity as Membership Secretary.

6) The President reported that Dr Alexander Calder had carried out a thorough job of examining the accounts once again this year. His assistance was greatly valued by the Council and as there had been no other nominations, the President asked members if they wished the Council to reappoint Dr Calder to examine the accounts for the following year on the Council's recommendation. The meeting agreed this proposal unanimously.

7) There was no other notified business.

8) The President noted that this had been another interesting year for the Society, though once again there was a note of sadness as a result of the recent death of former Council member Alan Petford. Alan had been a stalwart of the Council, contributing wise advice with good humour. He was also a gifted lecturer and educator and members recalled the visits to Liverpool and the Chilterns that he had led with great affection.

The meeting ended at 1.30pm.

Attendees: Paul Gardner, Chris Skidmore, Jean West, Peter West, Roger Holden, Stephen Duckworth, Stella Bond, Barbara Phillips, Robin Phillips, John Anderson, Tim Grass, Sara Crofts, Christopher Wakeling, Moira Ackers, Peter Ackers, Rob Ambler, Margaret Ambler, Stuart Leadley, Judith Bartlett, Timothy Bartlett, George Morton, Paul Griffiths, Angus McCormick, Denis Keating, William King, Mark Watson, Marianne Wakeling, Edward Royle, Graham Hague.

Guests: Julie Witherall, Neil Robertson