

THE LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD BY ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE
ON 19 NOVEMBER 2020

26 Nov 20

Present: The President of the Society and 29 Members

[Secretary's Note: There were 29 members present at the start of the meeting, with one additional member from Item 3]

ITEM 1 – WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1. The Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Roger Arden, Captain Hugh Daghish, Mr John Duckett, and Professor Ian Stanistreet. A quorum of members being present, the meeting was duly constituted and called to order.

ITEM 2 – ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2019 AGM

2. The Minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting had been published in the September 2019 edition of *The Bulletin* and in the members' area of the website, and additional copies had been circulated with the 2020 agenda. Decisions taken at the 2019 meeting had been fully implemented and there were no matters arising. The minutes were accepted as a true record. *Proposer*: Chairman. *Seconder*: Secretary. *Accepted*: 27 votes in favour with one abstention.

[Secretary's Note: There were 29 members present for Item 2. Voting was conducted using the Zoom 'polling' facility, with the limitations that as meeting 'co-hosts' the Chairman and Secretary could not vote electronically, and that the two joint members present would cast a single electronic vote. A potential 26 electronic votes could therefore be cast. The votes cast electronically were 25 in favour with one member failing to vote. The missing vote was recorded as an abstention]

ITEM 3 – ANNUAL REPORT

3. The Chairman's Annual Report had been submitted in May and published in the September edition of *The Bulletin* and on the website, with a further update on the impact of Covid-19 restrictions in June. Although the talks programme and archive-related activity remained severely disrupted, the Council had attempted to keep the Society operating as near normally as possible. *Bulletins* had continued to be published, while the introduction of video presentations had not only kept the talks programme running but had made the monthly talks available to the whole membership for the first time. The Society would continue to develop the video facility and was actively promoting collaborative activity with other Liverpool-based groups with similar interests to our own. The Chairman thanked members of Council for meeting the challenges since the onset of restrictions and stressed that the Council was always open to comments and suggestions for improvement from members.

ITEM 4 – FINANCIAL REPORT AND APPROVAL OF 2019-2020 ACCOUNTS

4. The Treasurer presented the independently examined 2019-2020 accounts which are attached. These had been published in the September 2019 edition of *The Bulletin* and in the members' area of the website. Although income for the year had fallen from £4710 in 2018/19 to £3500 in 2019/20, this was in part due to the large-scale updating of Standing Orders following the 2019 subscriptions increase which meant that a significant number of early payments for the 2020/21 membership year that would previously have boosted the end-of-year figure, were instead received within the first quarter of the current accounting year and would be correctly shown in this year's accounts. Additionally, book and merchandise sales had fallen by almost £400, and these had not been helped by the cancellation of monthly talks which had reduced the opportunities for sales. There had been a generous donation of £500 from the estate of our late Vice-President Graeme Cubbin. Expenditure for the year had been sharply reduced from £6700 in 2018/19 to £2800 in 2019/20. A significant portion of this saving had been achieved by switching in-year to a more competitive supplier which had reduced *Bulletin* printing costs by more than fifty percent for 2019/20 (and was projected to achieve a saving of seventy percent for 2020/21). Another substantial reduction was on IT costs which had reduced from £1100 development costs in 2018/19 to £140 annual running costs now that the website upgrade was complete. The net result was that the Society had shown a profit overall of almost £700 for the year (against a deficit of £2000 for the previous year) and the finances were judged to be secure and on-course to achieve a balance of income over expenditure in the current financial year. The 2019-2020 accounts were approved. *Proposer: Chairman. Secunder: Secretary. Approved: Nem Con.*

ITEM 5 – TALKS PROGRAMME FOR 2020-2021

[Secretary's Note: This item was taken immediately after Item 2 to allow the Talks Secretary to leave to attend the funeral of recently deceased LNRS member Gordon Wright]

5. The last three talks of the 2019-2020 programme had been cancelled because of Covid-19 restrictions, and no live talks had been possible since the end of February. To maintain the talks activity, video presentations had been introduced in September, with three released so far and enough recorded to last until February. Restrictions permitting, one further recording session would be sufficient to take the programme through until May 2021, although the topics might not be those originally scheduled. It was hoped that the live talks programme could resume from September 2021 and an outline programme was in place up to the following December. It was intended to continue videoing future talks to make them available to the wider membership and members were reminded that there were always opportunities to present research (including self-recording) for anyone who wished to do so.

ITEM 6 – ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

6. Mr William Williamson was elected as Vice-Chair in succession to Mr John Stokoe on completion of his tenure. *Proposer: Chairman. Secunder: Secretary. Agreed: Nem Con.*

ITEM 7 – ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

7. Mr Ian Duckett, Mr Bill Ogle, Mr Tony Melling and Mr Ted Scaplehorn were re-elected to the Council. *Proposer:* Chairman. *Secunder:* Vice-Chairman. *Agreed:* *Nem Con.*

ITEM 8 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8. No other business had been notified in advance of the meeting. A number of items were discussed without any formal decisions being made or votes taken.

a. Council members were thanked on behalf of the membership for their efforts in maintaining the Society during the current restrictions.

b. In response to a question about membership numbers, it was reported that current membership stood at 199 which was ostensibly unchanged from October 2019, although the inclusion in the current figure of a number of members who had still not paid their subscription meant that the effective membership was 186.

c. There was a wide-ranging discussion about recruitment and the need to improve the Society's publicity profile and material. Several ideas were put forward about ways to reach new members in the UK and overseas, particularly North America, including personal contacts, promoting the Society's website, and the strategic placement of publicity flyers and *Bulletins*.

[Secretary's Note: In post meeting discussion, the Council resolved to follow up a number of the suggestions made during the meeting. Development of new publicity material has already begun.]

ITEM 9 – DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

9. The next Annual General Meeting of the Liverpool Nautical Research Society will be held on Thursday 20 May 2021 at a time and venue to be notified.



E J SCAPLEHORN
Secretary

Attachments:

- A. Chairman's Annual Report – May 2019
- B. Accounts for the Full Year 2019-2020

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

Chair's Annual Report 2019 – 2020

Franklin D Roosevelt said “Smooth seas do not make skilful sailors” and the seas faced by your Council in the last few months of the 2019 – 2020 membership year have been far from smooth. However, the members of Council have proved that they are indeed skilful sailors and have met the challenges facing them. Thanks to their individual and combined effort your Society remains in good health as you will see from my report and, more importantly, from the Treasurer's report published elsewhere.

President: Captain M.D.R Jones became President of the Society in July 2019

Membership: The current membership at 1st May stands at 206 and I believe that out of that total about 40 are still to renew but I am fairly confident that they will do so shortly.

I know that renewal of membership this year has been a trifle confusing as several changes happened fairly close together over the last two years; changing the renewal date to 1st April, changing the subscription rates, offering two different rates and the introduction of payment by standing order. The Secretary and Treasurer have been working closely together to ensure that members are paying the right amount for the Bulletin option they have chosen.

Talks Programme: The Athenaeum continues to be a popular venue for our monthly talks and I would like to pay tribute to the staff for their unfailing support and assistance, when asked, for our meetings. The planned 2019-20 programme was as interesting and varied as usual thanks to Ian Duckett.

Unfortunately, as you know, the programme had to be suspended from March onwards due to the Covid 19 outbreak but some of our speakers have generously agreed to present their talks at a future date. This also meant that the AGM that should have been held this month (May) has been postponed.

You will have received the 2020-2021 programme with the June Bulletin that was sent out recently. If the situation improves we are hoping to resume the talks starting on 17th September but should that not be the case your Council is looking at alternative ways of bringing the talks to you and will let you know as soon as possible.

Finance: The Treasurer's report is published elsewhere and you will note that your Society's finances are in a healthy state.

Thanks to an initiative on the part of the Treasurer, Tony Melling, printing of the Bulletin is now with a different company and although the quality of the product is still of the high standard that you are used to, the cost has been reduced. Also reflected in the report is the generous bequest from the will of the late Captain Graeme Cubbin.

Bulletin: The Bulletin continues to go from strength to strength under Bill Ogle's editorship. Every quarter it contains a variety of articles, some are taken from the talks that have been given at the Athenaeum, others from a variety of sources, and all are interesting. Bill welcomes any feedback regarding the Bulletin, good or bad, and would welcome any contribution from you, the members. Those of you who are familiar with the website will know that every Bulletin published since the Society's inception is now available to search and read – back as far as before it was even called The Bulletin.

Website: Under Ted Scapelhorn's stewardship the website continues to improve but is not being utilised as much as it deserves. Some very interesting questions have been asked by users – for example- “How long would it have taken to transport bodies from Liverpool to Edinburgh by sail via the Forth and Clyde Canal?” I encourage members to make as much use of the website as possible, especially during the present circumstances. As if running the website isn't enough, Ted is also the Society's Secretary and, as you can imagine, has been particularly busy recently.

Archive: The Archive at MMM opened briefly but shut again due to refurbishment work on the second floor gallery. Re-opening was scheduled for the end of March 2020; I have no information at the moment as to when this is now likely to happen.

Covid 19: The pandemic that is sweeping the world has cast a shadow over every aspect of everyday life, not least over the activities of your society and we have temporarily had to trim some aspects of our activities to suit the circumstances:

- The monthly talks have been suspended for the time being but we are planning for resumption in September if restrictions are lifted, and we are working on a Plan B if that is not possible.
- The postponed AGM will be held concurrently with the meeting of 19th November at the Athenaeum. It will be held by Video Conference if restrictions still apply.
- Council meetings have also been suspended for the moment but members of Council have been meeting weekly using a video conference link and will continue to do so. A formal Council meeting is planned for May using the same facility. If the lockdown continues into the summer we will continue with our regular programme of council meetings by video link for as long as necessary.
- The Bulletin will continue to be published as usual, certainly in digital format and we anticipate that the September issue will be available in print format as well, and, as mentioned above, Bill will welcome any feedback as well as any articles or snippets that will interest other members
- The website will continue to be updated and I hope to see more questions and answers appearing in it; it is the ideal medium for keeping in touch in the present circumstances.

Before closing I would like to pay tribute to all members of Council who have contributed so much toward making your Society the success that it is. I have mentioned some already but it really is a team effort and I would like to thank them all for the support that I have received during this, my first year, as your Chair.

This is an unprecedented and trying time for all of us and I can only conclude with another nautical quote, this time from that world-famous poet, Anon – You can't control the wind, but you **can** trim the sails.

Elfyn Hughes May 2020

Liverpool Nautical Research Society

Accounts for the Full Year 2019/2020 held at Santander Bank PLC

Full Year: 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

Opening Bank Balances: Current Account: 1384 Deposit Account: 4610 Total = 5994

<u>Income</u>	<u>2018/19</u>	<u>2019/20</u>
Subscriptions	3608	2659
Donations	403	546
Refreshments	196	165
Book Sales	166	54
Merchandise Sales	319	48
Deposit Interest	18	24.7
<u>Total</u>	<u>4710</u>	<u>3496.7</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Bulletin Printing	2041	918
Distribution/Stationery	95	93
Room Hire	684	765
Speaker Expenses	456	78
Refreshments	239	141
IT Costs	1108	140
Hon. Treasurer Expenses	158	36
Hon. Secretary Expenses	125	
Merchandise	970	
Donations/Gifts	157	25
Bulletin Postage	565	591
Other Postage	14	
Pastoral	88	13
Bank Charges	10	
<u>Total</u>	<u>6710</u>	<u>2800</u>
Surplus / Deficit during Year	-2000	696.7
Opening Cash Balance	<u>7994</u>	<u>5994</u>
Closing Cash Balance	5994	6695

Closing Bank Balances: Current Account: 3596 Deposit Account: 3099 Total = 6695

Nominated Auditors:

Mr F. Molloy

Mr. J. Olin