

Trustees' Report for 2020

Our President

It is with great sadness that we have to record the death, in October 2020, of Alan Inder - our President for the last 9 years. Alan was a founder member of the Society and a very active member of the community over many years. A full obituary will appear in our next newsletter.

COVID-19

It may seem unnecessary to say it but, for the Bishop's Waltham Society and most other charities, the whole of 2020 was dominated by the inevitable changes in the government's response to the pandemic as it developed. In the early stages (March onwards) this made it impossible to plan the year and we did not feel able to resume a semblance of usual activity until September. There have been no face-to-face meetings since the last AGM. These circumstances are reflected in our report for the year.

Membership

At the beginning of 2019 our membership numbers had reached just over 340. By the start of 2020 the membership was just above 350, so we were more than holding our own. However, at the end of the year membership numbers were estimated to be approximately 335. This reflects both a perceptible increase in deaths amongst members and a difficult environment for recruitment (no public meetings).

Members' Meetings

Because of COVID, we ceased having public meetings in the Church Hall from March onwards. The Hall committee had to restrict events to just eight attendees. In August we experimented with a Zoom meeting, inviting a random group of 40 members to attend a trial - a short talk by Dr Lyndon Palmer. This was well received and so we re-started monthly meetings but via Zoom rather than in person. We've been delighted to see 40-45 screens at all meetings which, since most are couples, equates to around 70-80 viewers. Because many good speakers don't like using Zoom (lack of audience feedback) we have not been able to complete a full programme for 2021 yet, but will inform members on a monthly basis what is coming up next. Please put the third Thursday in the month in your diary anyway!

Newsletters

The Society published a Winter newsletter at the start of 2020 but did not publish any more during the year. There were two reasons for this. A concern that we might endanger our distributors (or break the rules) by delivering newsletters to individual homes and the absence, in a very restricted and confined world, of many notable local events - other than the dominant COVID-19 news stories. We do plan to publish a 'catch-up' Annual retrospective newsletter early in the New Year - circulated by post if necessary.

Planning

During 2020 the Society's Planning Sub-committee has not been particularly active. Again planning activity seems to have been constrained by economic uncertainty as a result of COVID. Our main objections were to the felling of an old oak tree in Ashton Close (permission was refused) and the retrospective application for the car wash at the Glider filling station. We do not see that as appropriate for its prime position in the Conservation Area next to the Palace and the Pond. Sadly we have lost the two

remaining members of our Planning Sub-committee - Alan Inder's death and Pauline Mousley's move away from Bishop's Waltham. We would like to hear from any members with an interest in planning matters who might be prepared to offer assistance in this important role for the Society.

Grants and Donations

These are briefly covered in the Treasurer's report, but we are pleased that we were able to continue making donations during the year. Donations were made as follows: Bishop's Waltham in Bloom: £225.00 Citizens Advice £150.00 Meon Valley Homestart Hampshire £200.00 We also gave £600.00 to the Royal British Legion, as agreed, based on the proceeds from the sale of the book "We Will Remember Them".

Bishop's Waltham Action Group (BWAG)

BWAG was formed in 2009 to resist Sainsbury's plans to build a Superstore on Station Road next to the Palace and South Pond. It ceased being active 5 years later in early 2015. We were pleased that when BWAG finally decided to close itself down during 2020, the remaining funds in its bank account (£500) were donated to the Society. This sum has been placed in a Special Projects account as a reserve for any special activities the Society may wish to undertake.

Publishing

The only recent commercial publication was the 28-page booklet to commemorate VJ Day, authored by Trish Simpson-Davis, entitled "Around Bishop's Waltham in the Second World War". It was published under one of the Society's ISBN numbers and sold for £5 a copy. Sales went well and profits have been shared between the BW Museum Trust and the Society. Separately, although we did not produce newsletters, the Society produced two 12-page booklets to celebrate VE day (8th May) and VJ Day (15th August). Both were researched and written by Tony Kippenberger and made available to members (still available to download free on our website - under Publications within Activities).

Website

Our website is designed to attract new members and to be an easy place for current members to keep in touch with what we are doing. It can be found at www.bishopswalthamsociety.org.uk.


Subscriptions

At the 35th AGM in 2020 the question of an increase in subscription rates was raised with the suggestion that subscriptions be raised from £7 and £12 to, say, £10 and £16. As recorded in the Minutes above, there was no formal show of hands, but the general agreement was this didn't sound unreasonable. In view of the cancellation of the early meetings in 2020 and the saving made on hall hire etc., the Trustees left this in abeyance for 2021 but will come forward with proposals for 2022.

Trustees

The chairman again wishes to express his gratitude for the hard work and dedication shown by the Society's trustees during the year. We are sorry to lose Pauline Mousley (who has moved away from Bishop's Waltham) and Colin Palma (who resigned for personal reasons). This means we are now down to just seven of our permitted 12 trustees (including officers). So we would ask members to seriously consider joining a friendly, good-humoured group of trustees. Please contact Tony Kippenberger to discuss what is involved in serving on the Trustee committee via info@bishopswalthamsociety.org.uk.

Treasurer's Report for 2020

Bishop's Waltham Society  Past • Present • Future					
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES			BALANCE SHEET		
YEAR ENDING 30th DECEMBER 2020			YEAR ENDING 30th DECEMBER 2020		
	2020	2019		2020	2019
INCOME	£	£	ASSETS	£	£
Subscriptions	1,970.00	2,078	Bank account	6,216.18	5,633
Donations (incl. BWAG)	845.04	330			
Gift Aid	426.55	429			
Meetings	235.04	171			
Changing Face	80.00	420			
WW1 Book	55.12	471			
Palace Guide	11.49	112			
Paypal fees	-0.60	0			
Total	£3,622.64	£4,011	Total Assets	£6,216.18	£5,633
EXPENDITURE	£	£	REPRESENTED BY	£	£
Administration	326.80	965	Brought forward	5,632.55	5,677
Grants (incl. Special Projects Start Up)	1,675.00	921	Excess of income/expenditure	583.63	-45
Newsletters	61.30	134			
Meetings	583.57	1,642			
Changing Face	30.00	193			
WW1 Book	0.00	1			
Purchases	210.00	200			
Website	152.34	0			
Total	£3,039.01	£4,056	Total	£6,216.18	£5,632
Excess of income/expenditure	£583.63	-£45	Carried forward	£6,216.18	£5,632
Special Projects Fund					
	2020	2019		2020	2019
INCOME	£	£	ASSETS	£	£
Start up	500.00	0.00	Bank account	500.00	0.00
Total	£500.00	£0.00	Total Assets	£500.00	£0.00
EXPENDITURE	£	£	REPRESENTED BY	£	£
			Brought forward	0.00	0
			Excess of income/expenditure	500.00	0
Total	£0.00	£0	Total	£500.00	£0
Excess of income/expenditure	£500.00	£0	Carried forward	£500.00	£0

The examined accounts and examiner's statement are presented for approval. As you would expect 2020 has been an exceptional year in many respects and the financial affairs of Bishop's Waltham Society have not been immune.

Of note are:

1. That income held up well largely owing to the loyalty of members and the grant from the dissolution of BWAG.
2. Meetings income was increased as a result of a refund from the Parish Hall.
3. Book sales were very low.
4. On the expenses side, you would expect administration costs to be lower and they were.
5. We used the funds which you gave to support village activities, many of which have struggled to continue.
6. Meetings costs were much reduced, the main cost being the purchase of a zoom license to enable distance meetings.
7. We have taken the opportunity to have the society's archive of all the newsletters from the 80's hard bound as a permanent and important social record.
8. The donation of the BWAG dissolution enabled the establishment of a special projects fund which will distinguish particular activities from the routine ebb and flow of the society's income and expenditure.

Keith A W Fry
Treasurer January 2020

"I confirm that the above Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 December 2020 is correct based on the information provided"

Paul Emmerson - Examiner January 2021