



Barnes Literary Society

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday March 21st 2007 at 9.15pm at the OSO.

Present: Fiona Smith (Chairman), Helen Willan (Vice Chairman and Membership Secretary), Claire Boyling (Honorary Secretary), David Minch (Honorary Treasurer), Lucy Hine (committee member), William Mortimer (committee member) together with 30 members of the Society.

Introduction by the Chairman.

Fiona Smith welcomed members and referred to the Agenda, Statement of Accounts and Minutes of the 2006 AGM which had been distributed to those present.

Apologies for Absence

None.

Minutes of AGM held on March 15th 2006

There were no matters arising and the minutes were approved unanimously as an accurate record (proposed by Charles Goldsmith and seconded by Cathy Owles).

Chairman's Report

A report for the year ended Sept 2006 is also printed in the Statement of Accounts: "Last year we hoped to build on our first year which was really a pilot project. We consider that the programme is the major element of BLS and we tried to offer variety of speakers and topics, including some 'high profile' speakers such as PD James and Margaret Drabble. We have included some speakers suggested by members and we are appreciative of your suggestions. We do keep all your suggestions, and review them when planning the programme. This year we have tried to offer yet more variety and have been most fortunate to have well known writers such as Justin Cartwright, Claire Tomalin and Roger McGough early in the season. The society's aim is 'to make literary talent available for the enjoyment of local people' and do include local writers and speakers as well as well known writers.

We have included visits in our programmes to give broaden horizons, for example the Richmond Literary walk and the visit to the British Library, and I think that those who came along enjoyed the opportunity for sociable members outings. Last year's membership was over 300 and this year looks to be similar. We are aware that some members like to bring the occasional guest and at our summer party – the literary quiz and entertainment – we had quite a number of visitors. We have continued to welcome a limited number of guests this year.

We have been very aware of the acoustic deficiencies of the audio equipment, and after exploring a number of options we decided to hire professional equipment. From your feedback this seems to have improved audibility.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank some of the people who support BLS, especially our patrons, Isla Blair, Julian Glover, Roger McGough, Patrick Neate and Jan Pienkowski, We are most appreciative of their encouragement. We have been fortunate too to have good links with the local bookshop, starting with Liz Beaumont, and now Isla Dawes, who have generously provided book vouchers for our regular raffle.

Also I would also like to pay tribute the members of the committee. It is due to their enthusiasm and dedication that BLS has continued with such vigour after the first flush of a new organisation. I am sure that you are well aware that we cannot arrange a programme of speakers and run events without a tremendous amount of work behind the scenes. We meet regularly and we all have clearly defined responsibilities. Please join me in thanking the committee for all their hard work.

Finally I would like to thank you the members for your support and enthusiasm. Without you there would be no BLS."

Honorary Treasurer's Report

The Hon. Treasurer referred the meeting to page 3 of the Statement of Accounts. Subscriptions and entrance fee income was up on the 2005 figure: this was due to increased membership (now nearly 300) and increased guest contributions, particularly at the Summer Event. Expenditure was also up as we were paying more for room rental and event expenses such as for the Summer Event were higher. Publicity costs increased by around 10%, and a one-off expense this year was the setting up of the website which we hope you find useful and informative. The cost of our independent examination of accounts also increased to a more standard level. There was a provision in reserves for the purchase of an audio system: this was not needed as we are hiring audio equipment rather than purchasing and the provision may not now be necessary. We do have a reasonable reserve and the Society is fully solvent.

There were no questions and the accounts were adopted.

Election of officers and committee

All the officers and committee members had agreed to stand for a further year and the members agreed to elect them en bloc. Nominations were proposed and seconded as follows: Fiona Smith (Chairman), proposed by Maria Harvey and seconded by Amelia Field; Helen Willan (Vice Chairman and Membership Secretary), proposed by Alan Sillitoe and seconded by John Greenwood; Claire Boyling (Honorary Secretary), proposed by Pam Waring and seconded by Candy Walker; David Minch (Honorary Treasurer), proposed by Julia Bebington and seconded by Susan Boyd; Lucy Hine (committee member with responsibility for publicity), proposed by Barbara Barnett and seconded by C G Hine and William Mortimer (committee member with responsibility for technical matters), proposed by Roger Hayward Smith and seconded by Sheila Hayward Smith.

The above officers and committee members were duly elected unanimously.

Any other business

One member enquired where the 2007 Summer party was to be held and the Chairman replied that it would be at the OSO. The meeting closed at 9.30pm.