



North West Kent Family History Society

(Covering N W Kent and ancient Kent parishes now S E London)

Minutes of the 39th Annual General Meeting
Held at West Heath School, Ashgrove Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1SR

Saturday 22 April 2017 at 12 noon

Present:

David Cufley, President and 94 members and 10 visitors.

Minutes Secretary: Stella Eames

David Cufley, Chair of the Meeting, welcomed members.

Stella Eames, Minutes Secretary, was asked to convene the meeting.

1. Notice Convening the Meeting

Read by Stella Eames.

2. Apologies

Ron Anthony, Robert Barnett, Tony Brown, Beryl Bush, Eileen Eves, Walter Eves, Jackie Gemmell, Raymond Gooding, Sylvia Hammond, Pauline Heathcote, Ann King, Jean Radford, Audrey Rainer, Malcolm Rainer, Susan Pittman, Fran Rogers, Robert Shepherd, Sandra Shepherd, David Turner, Keith Whitmore, Pauline Whitmore.

3. Minutes of the 38th Annual General Meeting (copies available on the website and distributed on arrival to all AGM attendees)

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Hilary Waters and seconded by Janet Rose. All other members in favour of agreeing the minutes, none against, no abstentions.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes of 2016 AGM

Hilary Waters asked for an update re storage. David Cufley responded that this would be included in the Chairman's Report.

5. Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2016 (attached to these minutes)

Pat Gooding the treasurer said she was pleased that in 2016 there had been a modest surplus of income over expenditure. The Executive Committee was trying all ways of cutting down on expenditure. The treasurer has a new accounting system, which is simpler to use and understand. The subscriptions are coming in and donations have also been good. Pat is now working on the Society's gift aid claim. Jean Stirk asked why the copies of the accounts distributed on arrival at the AGM were not signed by the Auditor/Examiner. Pat Gooding confirmed that the accounts had been signed off by the Independent Examiner and those originals were held by the Society.

Acceptance of the Accounts

Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Joyce Hoad and seconded by Tony Lathey. The accounts were approved unanimously. None against, no abstentions.

6. **Report of the Committee for 2016 (circulated in a shorter form with the March 2017 journal)**

Tony Codling, the Chairman, presented the report.

There were no questions from members regarding the report.

Janet Rose said it had been a difficult year and proposed thanks to Tony Codling for encouraging the other Executive Committee members and his leadership during the year.

Tony Codling explained that Tunbridge Wells FHS had voted at their AGM to close and to pass on their assets to NWKFHS. The Society welcomed Tunbridge Wells members to join us and enjoy membership of NWKFHS that covers some of their parishes. He was pleased to accept a cheque for £3,038.34 was presented to the Society on behalf of Tunbridge Wells FHS by Ruth Wiltshire (ex-Treasurer) and Veronica Siddall (ex-Secretary). It is TWFS's closing funds and they have already passed on the other assets.

7. **Josephine Birchenough Memorial Awards**

The President's Panel considers the applications. The panel comprises David Cufley, President; Joyce Hoad, Susan Pittman, Ron Anthony and Walter Eves Vice –Presidents; Tony Codling, Chairman; and Mike Weeks Vice-Chairman.

The awards criteria are for three categories of award: -

Category 1: Projects

Awarded to a person or persons who wish to follow some form of research or carry out a specific family history project, which fulfils the objects of the Society. For this category, members must apply by completing the application form and sending it to the President's Panel to be considered. The panel received no applications in 2016 for this category.

Category 2: Journal Articles

The President's panel judged all Articles in the Society Journal in 2016. All published articles in the Journal are considered; it is not necessary to apply (except that articles by Society Trustees are not considered).

Category 3: To recognise or support significant work that contributes to the Society and its objects.

Any two members, a proposer and seconder can submit recommendations to the Trustees or the President's Panel. The President's Panel will judge the recommendations.

No recommendations were received in 2016.

This year the panel considered an interesting selection of articles in the category 2 award.

No applications were received for category 1 'Projects' and category 3 'to recognise or support significant work that contributes to the Society and its objects'.

If you know of a member who could submit a 'project' or be considered for category 3 please get a copy of the application leaflet provided at each branch and in the Library and persuade them to apply.

The category 2 is for any article by members published in our Journal. Two classes of membership are not eligible for the award, namely Trustees and members of the President's Panel. In addition, non-members' articles are also not considered for the award. This has made some surprising statistics. There were 30 articles in total this year, 7 short articles and 23 longer articles. Short articles are generally a page long and often give a snap shot of a place or time providing information to help research. The longer articles are considered using the following criteria:

- 1 An interesting read.
- 2 Method: how research was approached and the steps taken to discover the information.
- 3 Sources: exact references and where the sources are located.
- 4 Demonstrate how the information is confirmed.
- 5 Problems: how they are overcome and commenting on pitfalls found.
- 6 Draw simple family tree(s) by hand or with computer programs to illustrate the family.

Two articles out of 14 ineligible articles were felt by the panel to be useful because they provided important information for family research. These were David Wright's piece on 'Kentish administrations in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1559-1660 and Pauline Heathcote's 'The 1939 Register in Belvedere, Kent' which that add to the quality of our Journal and to our knowledge.

The panel finally decided to make one award and three commendations to the longer articles by members.

The three commendations are:

Cliff Scottow's "John Scottowe, c1545-1607" that tells the story of the writing master of Norwich. These men were not only writers but also artists in the way they formed the capital letters leading the paragraphs.

Matthew Ball's "WW1 conscription and exemption, Sevenoaks men at the West Kent Tribune" this tells from the pages of the Kentish Messenger how men who wanted to be exempt from call up were judged by a panel of their peers.

Victor Nutt's "The Brons, a Berger and a Bible" tells the story of a bible brought at an auction and the family who owned it, the publishers and the enclosed bookmarks, dried flowers and newspaper cuttings.

The award this year goes to David Turner for his two articles that tell of the research on two members of the armed forces who died in WW1, their involvement in the war and their families. "In line of Duty, Alfred Charles Moss 1897-1918" was a Dartford man who volunteered in 1915 aged 18 who joined the Rifle Brigade. The second article tells of "Herbert Edeman Greenleaf 1880-1914" a Plumstead man who joined the Royal Navy in 1899, and lists the ships and actions he served in until he died in 1914. These articles are the first parts of a trilogy that show how to research people from merely a name on a memorial. The sources used are well set out and do not just say '1891 Census' but give the national archives reference, piece and page numbers, so can easily be found and followed up.

The Panel agreed to award David Turner £50.

In addition to this award, two short articles impressed the panel. Josephine Huet's 'Searching for ancestors in France' which tells how to research in France and the differences compared to English research which present themselves to anyone who has French connections. The second article is by Sarah Ingle "William Ince, Cabinet-maker from Archive to book" it explains how one can write up the story of a family member then get it published, in this case electronically via Amazon, ending up with a Kindle version that is cheap to produce and is then marketed.

The panel agreed to award Josephine Huet and Sarah Ingle £20 each.

Sarah Ingle's article was part of a theme about self-publishing that was also told in the articles by Colin Willeard's "Writing the book" and Jean Radford's "Wilmington a village in Kent". These articles show how writing your family history for members of your family can be made available to a wider audience. The Society has recognised that members want help to write the stories of their families and is now holding quarterly writing discussion groups held at the Joydens Wood Library. Perhaps this will help more members to write the story of their family, give them confidence to go further and offer them to the Journal before perhaps deciding to publish a book.

The President's Panel would like to thank all the authors of the articles published in 2016.

8. Honorary Members

There were no new honorary members selected this year.

9. President and Vice Presidents

The President and Vice Presidents are appointed by the trustees for four years and are all still current.

10. Election of Chair

Tony Codling was proposed as Chair by Keith Whitmore and seconded by R A Beckett. He was unanimously elected. None against, no abstentions.

11. Election of Vice Chair

Mike Weeks was proposed by Tony Brown and seconded by David Turner. He was unanimously elected. None against, no abstentions.

12. Election of Secretary

This position is now vacant as the Secretary did not stand for re-election and no-one else came forward.

13. Election of Treasurer

Pat Gooding was proposed by Maureen Griffiths and seconded by Lorraine King. She was elected unanimously. None against, no abstentions.

14. Election of Other Committee Members

Janet Rose proposed by Maureen Griffiths, seconded by Raymer Lofts.
Barbara Phillips proposed by Janet Rose seconded by Sheila Elisak.
Barbara Attwaters proposed by Sheila Elisak seconded by Christine Hills.
Fran Rogers proposed by Joyce Hoad and seconded by Peter Crawley.
Victor Nutt proposed by Jeannette McQuillan seconded by Trevor Allan
There is still a vacancy for a committee member but no-one else has come forward.

The meeting elected the committee members unanimously. All in favour, none against. No abstentions.

The Chair explained that the individual branches elected the three Branch Representatives and these people would form, with the above elected members, the Society Committee. It was noted that at the present time the Bromley branch does not have a designated representative. The committee is also made up with two ex-officio members, this the Chair explained means they are full members of the Society Committee by the jobs they undertake on behalf of the Society.

Pauline Heathcote was confirmed as Journal Editor, ex-officio.
Christina Barnett was confirmed as Membership Secretary, ex-officio.

15. Election of Independent Examiner

Terry King offered himself as independent examiner and was proposed by Stella Eames and seconded by Linda Meaden.

The members unanimously elected Terry King as the Independent Examiner. None against, no abstentions.

16. Any Other Business

Joyce Hoad; a Vice President; asked the members by show of hands whether they would like more meetings on Family History subjects e.g. censuses and less on general history e.g. suffragettes, the meetings consensus was in agreement. Also by show of hands whether they would like the workshops to progress in a logical sequence e.g. beginners sessions and then gradually getting into more depth of knowledge, the consensus of the meeting thought this impractical. She also asked whether workshops should be in different areas in NW Kent, not just in the Joyden's Wood Library. This point was discussed in detail.

Janet Rose observed that this would require much more organising by Victor – is that fair? Trevor Allan was concerned that the library is already paid for and other venues would cost unless we used house groups. There were 42 people at the library last week. Mike Weeks said he would like to get more house groups running and possibly they could host mini workshops in homes so no venue cost. Victor Nutt pointed out that workshop leaders give their time freely but if workshops were to be held in house groups as well as at the library more leaders would be required or existing leaders would be asked to do more. One more example of how much our volunteers do.

Joyce Hoad went on to say that originally members came from family history classes run by members such as her and others. Now local authorities do not provide these classes workshops provide this service.

Trevor Allan asked anyone who knew anything about the war memorial in St Albans Church, Dartford and /or Canadians who left the UK in the late 1800s and enlisted in the Canadian Army to let himself or David Turner know.

Trevor Allan said that there are many organisations, which give grants for research projects and publications. He asked if we had considered such grants. The Chair said his comment would be noted by the Trustees.

Certificates of Thanks

These were presented to:

Christina and Robert Barnett; for being membership secretary (Christina) and both of them helping at Sevenoaks meetings over many years. Christina was present and was presented with the award certificate.

Sandra and Robert Shepherd for helping at Dartford Branch meetings for 25 years. They were not present and the Chair agreed to present them with their award at the next Dartford meeting.

Sheila Elisak gave a vote of thanks to Barbara Attwaters and her team for organising the day's activities. Both proposals were acknowledged by the meeting.

Meeting closed at 1.05pm.