

ASSOCIATION OF OXFORD UNIVERSITY PENSIONERS

MINUTES OF THE 29th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held in Lecture Room 1, Department of Engineering Science
at 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday 18th February 2015

Present – Carlos Ruiz (President), Gilliane Sills (Chairman); the following members of the committee: Caroline Carpenter, Wendy Claye, Geoff Clough, Susan Greenford, John and Caroline Harding, Eileen Iredale, Andrew Moss, Laurence Reynolds, John and Gaynor Woodhouse; and over 100 members.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – None were received.

Welcome – The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Minutes of the 28th Annual General Meeting, held on Wednesday 19th February 2014** – copies of the minutes had been circulated, and they were **accepted as a correct record** *nem con*.

3. **Matters** arising – None were raised.

4. **Chairman's Report**

- **Thanks** – Professor Sills started by expressing thanks to the Committee and the University, the latter including Jan Killick and Marie Hough from the Pensions Office, and all those involved in the Newsletter production and distribution: Jean Butler, Andrew Harvey and Anne Brunner-Ellis for the Newsletter, Bob Malloy in Reprographics and Sandra Dyson in the post room.
- **Outings in the past year** – The statistics for the Summer 2014 and Winter 2014/15 were displayed on the screens, and are given below:

Summer Programme 2014			
Month	Visit	Number of applicants	Number offered places
April	William Morris Gallery and Olympic Park	94	All
May	Stoneleigh Abbey and Kenilworth	90	All
June	Whitchurch Silk Mill and Mottisfont Abbey	106	All
July	President's Garden Party	88	All
August	Famous Mothers, including Clarence House	103	All
September	Beechwood Beauty, including river trip	80	All
Winter Programme 2014/15			
October	BMW	120 plus some late	All except late applications
November	University Church of St Mary	120	All
December	Christmas lunch	125	All
January	Centre for Islamic Studies	239	All
February	Slimbridge	114	106 initially, eventually all
March	Blue Plaques walks	152	All

The Chairman said that, now that a policy of arranging two coaches for every visit had been adopted, it had been possible to accommodate all applicants for all visits. She said that applications for the winter visits were higher in number, but that venues had been generous in arranging for the higher numbers (particularly the Islamic Centre, who had originally agreed to arrange for 150 visitors, but had raised the limit to 225, which had proved to be sufficient as some had dropped out). Altogether she said that this had been a very successful year for the Association in

terms of trips and visits, and she expressed thanks to the members of the Committee who had arranged and led the visits.

- **The AOUP Website** – Gilliane expressed thanks to Stephanie Jenkins, who had now stepped down as Webmaster, but who had originally taken on the role at a very early stage in the development of the website, and had done a great deal to develop it, especially by adding photographs. She went on to say that Rosemary Williams had very kindly offered to take on the job, at a time when more and more people are using the website to find information about AOUP. She also asked members to **make sure that they had let either the Secretary or the Webmaster know their email address**, as this could be very important if there were last minute changes with events or visits.

5. **Treasurer's Report** – The Treasurer had provided the following tables, which were displayed on the screens.

Association of Oxford University Pensioners - Annual Accounts		
Income for the year ended 31 December 2014		
	2014	2013
	£	£
University Contributions	15,984	2,119
Subscriptions	4,871	5,015
Trips	36,403	30,183
Christmas Lunch	3,940	4,299
Bank Interest	203	181
Total	61,401	41,797

Association of Oxford University Pensioners - Annual Accounts		
Expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2014		
	2014	2013
	£	£
Outings and Functions	39,762	30,002
Committee and Admin Expenses	346	815
Newsletters OU	6,245	
New Members Evening OU	973	689
Lecture Fees and Refreshments OU	1,253	2,635
Christmas Lunch	4,714	5,289
Honoraria	775	750
Miscellaneous	0	10
Insurance	186	185
Audit	0	100
Bristol / Canterbury advance payment	933	1,013
Total	55,187	41,488
Surplus for the year	6,214	309

Balance Sheet		
	2014	2013
Accumulated Fund Balance as at 1st January 2014	23,773	23,464
Surplus on year	6,214	309
Total	29,987	23,773
Barclays Bank: Community Account	603	592
Premium Account	9,003	3,002
Skipton Building Society	20,381	20,179

Balance at 31 December 2014	29,987	23,773
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- **Treasurer's Report** - The Treasurer remarked that income from subscriptions had fallen slightly, but he said that income from Standing Orders is increasing. The introduction of the inducement to pay by Standing Order (the new ruling that those paying by SO pay nothing until 1st of January in the year following when the SO is set up) is likely to result in more reliable subscription income and reduce administrative work. Geoff went on to explain that the surplus on the year was largely due to back payments for previous years received from the University (and the fact that no charge was made for the production of the Spring 2014 Newsletter). He said discussions with the University are on-going about future funding for the items which the University provides, through AOUP, for all OU pensioners: the Newsletter, the Reception for New Members and the Winter Lectures.
- **Appointment of Independent Examiner** – Geoff Clough told the meeting that he was grateful to Mr Tim Croft, the Independent Examiner, for his scrutiny of the accounts. He went on to that he was happy to **propose** the appointment of Mr Croft as Independent Examiner for the year 2015. This motion was put to the meeting and **agreed** nem con.

6. **Secretary's Report** – Caroline Harding reported membership statistics as follows:
Membership Statistics as at 16th February 2015:

Social Members –

493	Single Members	up 8.6% on 2014 AGM
331	Couples	up 8.2% on 2014 AGM

Non-Social Members

3842		up 0.8% on 2014 AGM
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She said that these figures reflect quite a large increase in Social Membership, whereas the increase in 'Ordinary Membership' is not so great

The Secretary said that the AOUP Committee is extremely fortunate in the support it gets from the Pensions Office, led by Jan Killick, Head of Pensions, and she said that David James gives a great deal of help with keeping the database of members up-to-date as regards changes of address, deaths, etc. She also paid tribute to the very important work done by Marie Hough, the Pensioner Visitor, and she thanked staff of the Engineering Department where Committee meetings and the lectures are held. In particular she mentioned Sara Downs, the Receptionist, Sukarni Wheeler who arranges room bookings; and Lisa Johnson and her staff who provide the catering. Most of all, she paid tribute to the Chairman, Gilliane Sills, who gives such an amazing amount to AOUP, not only in leadership, but in real engagement with the whole organisation.

Caroline finished by saying that it is her last AGM as Secretary, and that Jan Allen is taking over. She said that Jan will do an EXCELLENT job, and AOUP is very lucky indeed to have her!

7. **Changes to the Constitution** - The Chairman explained that, at present the Constitution specifies Officers (and the arrangements for their election and membership of the Committee) as quoted from Item 6 of the Constitution as follows:

6. (a) The management of the Association shall be vested in a Committee which shall consist of: a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Liaison Officer, and not less than five nor more than ten Ordinary Members.
- (b) The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Liaison Officer shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting, to hold office for three years, and shall be eligible for re-election.

In practice it has been found that the Office of Liaison Officer is not really needed because it is better for liaison with the University to be undertaken by various members of the Committee according to which member has appropriate contacts. It is, however, felt that the post of Newsletter Editor should be added as an Officer of the Committee. In addition it is felt that the duties of the Secretary could, in the future, usefully be split between a 'Committee Secretary' who would be responsible for arranging and servicing meetings and a 'Membership Secretary' who would maintain the database of members, communicate with members and make arrangements for the Reception for new members and the Winter Lectures. It was **proposed** from the Chair that Item 6 of the Constitution should be changed to read as follows:

6. (a) The management of the Association shall be vested in a Committee which shall consist of: a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Membership Secretary, Honorary Committee Secretary, Honorary Newsletter Editor and not fewer than five nor more than ten Ordinary Members.
- (b) The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Membership Secretary, Honorary Committee Secretary and Honorary Newsletter Editor shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting, to hold office for three years, and shall be eligible for re-election.

The original text of Item 6 in the Constitution and the proposed changes were displayed on the screens. It was then **proposed** from the Chair that Item 6 of the Constitution should be changed as suggested. This **proposal was put to the vote** and the suggested changes were **carried** *nem con*.

8. **Election of Committee Members** – Jan Allen had agreed to stand for election to the Committee. Her election was **proposed** by Laurence Reynolds, **seconded** by Geoff Clough and **carried** *nem con*.
9. **Election of Officers** –Jan Allen, having agreed to take on the two secretarial roles (Committee Secretary and Membership Secretary), her election to both roles was **proposed** from the Chair and **seconded** by Laurence Reynolds and **carried** *nem con*. Thanks were expressed to Jan for taking on both roles.
10. **Vote of Thanks** - The Chairman told the meeting that Susan Greenford is standing down after four years as Events Manager: an extremely demanding job since well over 100 applications have to be dealt with each month. The Chairman also thanked Eileen Iredale, who, having served the full six years on the Committee, was stepping down, although she had very kindly agreed to continue to record the deaths of University Pensioners for the Newsletter. She went on to thank both John and Caroline Harding, who had each been Secretary (John for seven years and Caroline for four years). She finished by reporting that Caroline Carpenter had kindly agreed to take on the role of Events Manager.
11. Programme **for 2015** – A list of events proposed for summer 2015 was displayed on the screen, and briefly outlined, and the Chairman mentioned that full details would be included with the forthcoming Spring Newsletter. The Chairman drew attention to the fact that the 2015 Carol Service and Christmas Lunch will take place on Wednesday 16th December 2015.
12. **Any Other Business** – Nothing was raised.

Talk following the AGM – Simon Bailey, Keeper of the Archives

(The following notes were kindly provided by Jan Allen)

Currently based in the Bodleian Library, the Archives are part of 'Special Collections' at the University, serving to select and preserve documentary administrative records of the University and its Departments for administrative and research purposes.

The Keeper of the Archives, Simon Bailey gave a lively overview of the Archives from the earliest grants, charters and deeds of 1214 and statutes from around 1300 to the student riots of the 1960s and early 1970s. There are records of the Chancellor's Court which ran from 1434 to 1968 and in the early days was used to pursue undergraduates for debt, the minutes of Convocation and Congregation from 1438, though Simon pointed out that the functions have changed greatly over time, Matriculations from 1572 and Examinations from 1638. Records for the University Chest began in 1868 and were the first to make use of a double entry system.

Interesting anecdotes included 'The Hanging of the Clerks' by King John in 1209, according to the chroniclers, which resulted in the dispersion of scholars to Paris and to Cambridge, not only as Simon noted, economically disastrous for Oxford at the time but enabling Cambridge to be seen as Oxford's first spin-out company.

In 1214, The Award of the Papal Legate, the oldest original document in the Archive granted privileges to the graduate scholars of the town and thus beginnings of the university community. Records for the conveyance of a property in Catte street around 1200 also indicate that at that time the area was occupied largely by people associated with books, a bookbinder, an illuminator etc. and by 1320 the Chancellor's Book provided procedure for Chancellors, early evidence of a university statute.

The Archive grew, held initially in the Chest of the Five Keys, all held by 5 different officers until by 1449, it was full of documents and in an early example of records management, some were dispersed elsewhere in the University. Their whereabouts later the subject of research by one Brian Twine. In 1628 the Proctoral cycle was introduced under Charles 1, and in 1639 came the Codification of University Statutes. Other records, such as those relating to Vice Chancellors were added to the Archive over time as the administration of the University evolved.

Simon finished his entertaining talk with illustrations from the press of the student protests of 1968 and in particular the occupation of the Examination Schools in 1973. He mentioned that the students only got into the building because with unfortunate timing, the porter was letting his wife out of the car park at the back of the building when the students arrived at the front and they remained in the building for nearly a week. Christopher Hitchens the British-American author, polemicist, debater and journalist was prominently involved and Simon mentioned his ability to maintain a double life at this time, as a left wing student activist but also a regular guest at high table where he was known as a sparkling conversationalist. Some AOUP members had their own memories of this time at the University.

It would be good to hear more from Simon Bailey at another time, there must be many more stories to tell ...