



BERKSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION
Registered Charity 1097355.
President: Joan Dils

Email: secretary@blha.org.uk
Website: www.blha.org.uk

The 42nd Annual General Meeting of the Berkshire Local History Association

Saturday, 6th April, 2019 at 11:30am
In the Hall, Watlington House, Reading

Those present: Joan Dils (President), Prof. Ted Collins (Vice-President), David Cliffe (Chairman), Jonathan Brown, John Chapman, Dave Osborne, Margaret Simons and Ann Smith (committee members), and around 30 other members.

Apologies: Jean Debney, Anne Harrison, Fiona Hope, David Lewis (Treasurer), and Christine Weightmann.

1. Welcome by President Joan Dils.
2. The 2018 AGM minutes were circulated to members in advance and taken as read.
3. There were no matters arising.
4. The report from the Treasurer had been sent to members. Margaret proposed accepting them, seconded by John and the meeting agreed them.
5. Journal Editor's report was circulated in advance and agreed.
6. Newsletter Editor's report was not previously circulated. John asked for more book reviews and short articles on discoveries. He asked history societies to let him know if they needed 3 copies of the printed newsletter, and how they circulated them to members. He also talked about the proposed Archives seminar for local historians in The Barn at Purley on Sat 26 October. It will focus on cataloguing your archives, digitising them and offering any exceptional materials to the Berkshire Record Office.
7. Membership Secretary's report was not previously circulated. Ann said that membership was similar to last year's, with 80 individual members, 16 museums and libraries and 39 local history societies. We welcomed the most recent society to join: The Berkshire Gardens Trust in January 2019.
8. Web designer's report: Dave reminded members to send events to go on the BLHA website, and to keep their society details updated. He answered a query from the Twyford and Ruscombe LHS about linking their website to the BLHA newsletter page.
9. Chairman's report had been circulated to members. David explained that the delay in getting out minutes, reports and the agenda for the AGM was due to health problems

in the family of the secretary Carol Dixon-Smith, and she has had to resign. He appealed for a new secretary. The work involves organising the AGM and doing minutes for it and the 3 committee meetings a year. We also need a new honorary examiner of accounts, due to the retirement of Dr Clive Burgess. He was thanked for all his past work.

10. Election of the President: Joan Dils was proposed by Margaret, seconded by John and elected by the meeting.
11. Election of the Vice-President: Ted Collins was proposed by Audrey, seconded by Catherine and elected by the meeting.
12. Election of Officers: David Cliffe was proposed as Chairman and David Lewis as Treasurer by Vicki, seconded by Catherine and elected by the meeting.
13. Election of Members of the Executive Committee: Jonathan Brown, John Chapman, Elias Kupfermann, Dave Osborne, Margaret Simons and Ann Smith were proposed by Ted, seconded by Vicki and elected by the meeting.
14. Election of the Honorary Examiner of Accounts: David explained that this needs to be someone with a knowledge of accounting. Catherine said that she may know someone and will check with them.
15. Any Other Business: David said that the Marcham Society has offered to host the next AGM in their new village hall and the date will be 28 March 2020. John offered to bring the Berkshire flag.

The meeting was followed by a talk on the work of The Mills Archive by Ron Cookson, and this was followed by a visit to the Archive in Watlington House itself. After lunch, there was a walk round the area, looking at different building styles, and contrasting houses built for the wealthy, and those built for “ordinary” people. At Wesley Methodist Church, Jonathan Brown gave a short talk on its history, and there was chance to look round. We walked round Eldon Square, and examined the statue of Rufus Isaacs, First Marquess of Reading. The afternoon ended at the Polish Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus - the former Anglican Church of St. John the Evangelist, where we received a warm welcome. David Cliffe gave a short talk on the history of the building, and after looking round, we went into the former school room for tea, coffee, and home-made cake, before making our way homewards.