

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Oxfordshire Local History Association, Saturday, 7th May 2022 at 12.30 pm.

The AGM was preceded by three talks on the theme of Oxfordshire: World War Two at Home. Bill King covered Dad's Underground Army, the Auxiliary Units with headquarters at Coleshill which were to become the English Resistance in the event of invasion; Malcolm Graham talked about Air Raid Precautions and air defences in the county; Matthew Smaldon covered prisoner of war camps in Oxfordshire and the experiences of individual prisoners.

Attendances: There were present the following Officers and Committee Members: Christopher Fance (Chairman); Liz Woolley (Treasurer, Membership Secretary and e-Bulletin editor); Malcolm Graham and Margaret Hauser (Committee Members), Vanessa Moir (Committee Member, co-opted during the last year) plus another 32 people, 29 of them members of OLHA or member societies.

1. Apologies and declaration of conflicts of interest: Apologies were received from Committee members Norma Aubertin-Potter, Simon Townley, Kathy Davies and Chris Hall, and from Catherine Hitchens, Michael Heaton and Wendy Archer. No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Minutes: The Minutes of the AGM of 2021 had been distributed. No objections were received to the Chairman signing them as a correct record. Proposed: Linda Mustill. Seconded: Margaret Hauser.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes: There were none.

4. Officer's Reports:

(a) Chairman's Report for the year 2021/22:

The Oxfordshire Local History Association, known as OLHA, exists for all those interested in the history of Oxfordshire. It aims to foster and promote the study and publication of local history. It acts as an umbrella organisation for local history groups in the county.

Among its activities, it campaigns to preserve and improve services for Oxfordshire local historians and normally holds regular liaison meetings with the management of the Oxfordshire History Centre, the Bodleian Library and occasional *ad hoc* meetings with local government officials. Meetings with the Oxfordshire History Centre have taken place at first using Microsoft Teams and later in person. Meetings with the Bodleian recommenced in person in October 2021. Recently, the County Council had created an online consultation about Libraries and Heritage, designed to be completed by individuals. The committee decided to complete a committee overview, which was welcomed by the the OCC individuals overseeing the consultation.

The project to scan the Henry Minn and the J.C.Buckler collections of photographs and drawings has been completed and the images have been placed on Picture Oxon, where they can be accessed free of charge. This was conducted with the co-operation of the Bodleian Library, the Oxfordshire History Centre and funded by the Oxfordshire Family History Society.

OLHA's programme of small financial grants continues, though no grant has been made in the last year. We also continue to make regular donations to help fund the Oxfordshire volumes of the Victoria County History and to provide items of equipment for the Oxfordshire History Centre.

The AGM in May 2021 was held online using Zoom and after the business of the AGM was finished, a talk followed. November 2021 saw the return of a normal Study Day. The Meetings Secretary's report has the details. Liz Woolley has continued to compile the very popular monthly eBulletin of news and events relevant to local historians and Chris Hall has been working on the latest edition of our journal. This has recently been posted to OLHA Members. The editor is retiring after 25 years in which he has raised the quality of the journal.

(b) Treasurer & Membership Secretary's Report for the year 2021/22:

ACCOUNTS

The financial year 2021/22 ended on 31 March 2022. The accounts are summarised overleaf and have been examined and signed off by the external examiner Andrew Churchill Stone of Mercer Lewin Ltd, Chartered Accountants, 41 Cornmarket, Oxford OX1 3HA. The key points are:

- The Association is in a healthy position financially with **£4,327** in the bank at year-end. During the financial year, **income (£4,192)** exceeded **expenditure (£3,998)** by **£194**.
- **Subscription income (£3,299)** was slightly higher than in 2020/21 due to an increase in the number of members.
- A **gift aid claim** on subscriptions and donations received during 2021/22 resulted in income of **£365**.
- Due to Covid-19, one study meeting was held via Zoom (in May 2021) and the other in person (in November 2021, in Henley). No charge was made for attendance at the Zoom study day; **income from the Henley study day was £472**. **Costs for both study days totalled £554**. [In 2020/21 both study days were held via Zoom, hence income was zero and costs were very low.]
- No journal was produced during 2021/22 and hence there was no expenditure on printing, and only **£23 on postage**.
- Probably due to the on-going effects of Covid-19, no **grant applications** were received during 2021/22. However, we made **donations of £1,000** to the **Oxfordshire History Centre** and **£2,000** to the **Oxfordshire Victoria County History (VCH) Trust**.
- In January 2022 the bank at which we keep our current account, HSBC, started to charge charities of our size a monthly service charge of £5 plus a fee of 40p for every cheque issued or paid in. Hence **bank charges** amounted to **£19**. We have tried to minimise these by adopting internet banking, and discouraging members from using cheques to make subscription and study day payments.
- **Miscellaneous expenditure of £392** included our annual subscription to the British Association for Local History (BALH); auditing of the previous year's accounts; and website hosting, domain name renewal and purchase of an SSL certificate.

MEMBERSHIP

- At the end of the 2021/22 financial year we had 189 individual members; 83 societies; 10 journal-only subscribers; 15 complimentary; total: 297. We estimate that on average Oxfordshire local history societies have a membership of c. 40, so OLHA represents about 3,530 Oxfordshire local historians.
- Overall membership has grown slightly (up 6% on the previous year). We were pleased to welcome 29 new members during 2021/22 including four societies: Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum; Burford Community Archive; Lord Robartes Regiment of Foote; and Steventon History Society.

(c) Journal editor's report – 2021-2022 (read by the Chairman)

For the latest journal ,Vol 10/4, the print run was 375; these were received from the printers on 25 April. After stamping and enveloping (a laborious process), all copies were mailed to members and contributors on 29 and 30 April. Approx. 45 copies remain which I am transferring to the membership secretary, who will use them to supply new members.

Vol 10/4 consists of 92 pages plus covers.

There are several book reviews for which I have not had space; I shall be sending these to my successor, along with details of a couple of pieces that have been commissioned but not yet received.

(d) Acting Meetings Secretary's Report for the year 2021/22 (given by the Chairman):

The pattern of OLHA Study Days gradually returned to normal during the last year. The May AGM was held online and was followed by a single talk given by Dr Malcolm Graham It was entitled '*Removing nuisances and creating prospects: 250 years of the Paving Commission in Oxford*'. It dealt with the Oxford Paving Act of 1771 which was an important landmark in Oxford's history.

The normal pattern for a Study Day resumed on Saturday 20 November 2021 in the Chantry House in Henley-on-Thames. The two main speakers, Robert Peberdy and Simon Wenham, dealt with economic activity on the Thames. They were followed by two short talks about the Chantry House and the Red Lion next door, given by Ruth Gibson and Dr Kathryn Davies. These buildings had both been built in the 1460s. In the afternoon, Dr Simon Townley led a very informative tour of Henley.

Our long-standing Meetings Secretary had resigned for health reasons just as the pandemic started and the committee is looking for some-one to replace her. The duties are not onerous and the person will have the active support of the committee. Please volunteer.

(e) E-bulletin Editor's Report for the year 2021/22:

The e-bulletin was sent to members and to other subscribers on the first day of every month throughout the year. At year-end (31 March 2022) it was being sent to just over 490 recipients, (compared to 450 the same time last year), including OLHA's 83 society members, many of

whom forward it to their own members. Feedback on the e-bulletin has been positive.

The editor welcomes items of news and notices of forthcoming events; text and images can be sent to membership@olha.org.uk by the 25th of the month prior to publication.

It was agreed to approve the Officers' reports, no objections having been received. Proposed: Janet Hurst. Seconded: Graham Osborn-King.

5. Election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Officers and Committee for 2022/23: The Chairman reported that Chris Hall is retiring as Journal Editor and Committee Member after 25 years, and Margaret Hauser is retiring as a Committee Member after seven years. He thanked both of them for their invaluable contributions to OLHA and to Oxfordshire local history. Vanessa Moir has been proposed as Journal Editor and member of the committee by Margaret Hauser and seconded by Christopher Fance. Priya Atwal has been proposed as a committee member by Norma Aubertin-Potter and seconded by Christopher Fance. Other members of the committee are prepared to stand for re-election: Chairman: Christopher Fance (proposed by Liz Woolley, seconded by Simon Townley); Vice-Chairman: Simon Townley (proposed by Liz Woolley, seconded by Kathy Davies); Secretary: Norma Aubertin-Potter (proposed by Christopher Fance, seconded by Kathy Davies); Membership Secretary, Treasurer, E-Bulletin Editor: Liz Woolley (proposed by Norma Aubertin-Potter, seconded by Kathy Davies); Committee members: Kathy Davies (proposed by Liz Woolley, seconded by Malcolm Graham); Malcolm Graham (proposed by Christopher Fance, seconded by Norma Aubertin-Potter); Philip Morris (proposed by Malcolm Graham, seconded by Margaret Hauser). The post of Meetings Secretary is currently vacant and the Chairman encouraged members to volunteer for this role and indeed to join the committee.

6. Election of Independent Examiner of the Annual Accounts: Mercer Lewin was re-elected for the year 2022/23 (proposed by Liz Woolley, seconded by Christopher Fance).

7. OLHA's compliance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR): The Chairman reported that the Association followed the Government guidelines. OLHA's GDPR policy can be viewed on the OLHA website.

<https://www.olha.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2021/03/OLHA-data-privacy-notice-March2018-reviewed-March-2021.pdf>

8. Consideration of Matters raised by members of which due notice (as set out in the Association's Constitution) has been given in advance to the Chairman. There were none.

9. Emergency motions (at the meeting's discretion): There were none. The AGM ended at 1 pm.