

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the BSHM
held at Birkbeck College, London
at 1.30 pm on Thursday 27th October 2016**

The meeting opened at 1.30 pm with the President, Philip Beeley, in the Chair. There were 23 members of the Society present.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Robert Burn, David Wilkinson, Alex Craik, Ciarán Mac an Bhaird, Mark McCartney, Raymond Flood, Rosie Cretney, Peter Neumann, Chris Hollings, Sue Pope, and John Williamson.

Before proceeding, the President had the poignant task of announcing the names of those members who had sadly died in the last year. These were George Pearce of Beaconsfield, who died on 7th November 2015, Westley Eaton of Belfast, who died on 7th January 2016, Ken Pledger of Wellington, New Zealand, who died on 3rd May 2016, and our own former Council Member, Christopher John Earle, known to us as John Earle, who died on 29 August 2016.

June Barrow-Green gave a short eulogy in memory of John Earle.

Members stood in their memory.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on 29th October 2015

a) Approval of Minutes

No corrections to the minutes of the 2015 AGM were raised. The motion that **these minutes be taken as a true record of the 2015 AGM** was **proposed** by Sarah Hart and **seconded** by Terry Froggatt. The motion was passed **nem. con.**

b) Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Officers' Reports and Accounts

These refer to the timeframe Jan 1st to Dec 31st 2015 and are collated under the BSHM Company Annual Report, filed with Companies House.

a) Ken Lord, as **Membership Secretary**, outlined his report. Membership showed a slight increase above the 300 level (where we have been for recent years), with most momentum coming from an increase in overseas members. This might have been helped by BSHM online technology: the new BSHM website design; the introduction of online payments during 2015 (which facilitates payments from overseas); Facebook with 500+ members; and also our very popular @mathshistory Twitter feed with the steadily growing number of followers now above 39,000. The proportion of UK members who pay by direct debit remains at 77%, which is fairly high and is the method most helpful to BSHM in terms of administrative time. Other methods of payment (cash, cheques and on-line), are spread over the year, and take much more time per transaction to administer.

b) Nigel White, as **Treasurer**, outlined his accounts, which showed that the financial state of the Society was healthy, although in 2015 the opportunity was taken to fund two exceptional items from reserves (*viz*: website redevelopment and travel bursaries for our members wishing to give talks at CSHPM). He had the following points to make. With the Pound Sterling falling against the US Dollar, the subscription for *Historia Mathematica* would have to increase to £36 since we pay for it in dollars. As for membership, there would be a new Under 25 rate instead of the original student rate, and the Concessionary rate would now include those retired, unwaged, and full-time students aged 25 or over.

c) There was a question from the floor on the section “Structure, Governance and Management” on page 3 of the 2015 Report. Apparently there were aspects of the subsections “Trustee induction and training” and “Risk management” that had been described for many years as being “under review”. Council took on an **Action** to discuss these.

d) **Presidential Report**. The President, Philip Beeley, addressed the floor and outlined his 2016 report. This will be detailed in the ‘Reports and Accounts’ package for 2016, filed with Companies House next year.

Key points were:

i) The year had seen a number of excellent and well-supported meetings, notably the Research in Progress meeting in February, which saw the awarding of the Neumann Prize to Sydney Padua for her graphic novel, *The Thrilling Adventures of Lovelace and Babbage*, and the wonderful weekend meeting at Queen’s, dedicated to the memory of our dear friend Jackie Stedall, entitled, “Mathematics emerging: A tribute to Jackie Stedall and her influence on the history of mathematics”.

ii) Other events, whether BSHM, joint, or independently on related themes, had taken place over the year at Gresham (where we were also due later that afternoon), in

Manchester (Women in Mathematics), Derby (The Italian Commercial Revolution), Birkbeck (History of Number Theory), Oxford (John Wallis), Rewley (Mathematics and the Enlightenment), the Oxford Mathematical Institute (Mathematical Communication during the Cold War), Bath Spa (Anglo-Danish conference on the history of mathematics in teaching), culminating in the marvellously arranged conference, full of intellectual, culinary, and visual delights: "Mathematical Biography: A MacTutor Celebration", held at the University of St Andrews.

iii) The President paid tribute to all those whose meticulous and reliable organisational skills had made these conferences the successful and enjoyable events that they were, and welcomed the opportunities offered for recruiting new members for the Society, especially by Research in Progress and the Birkbeck meetings. In acknowledging the problems of current arrangements with Gresham College for the BSHM Lectures, he promised members that Council was urgently seeking a way to solve this problem, either through a change of venue, or through finding a better way to manage seating at Barnard's Inn Hall.

iv) Finally, the President offered gratitude to his Council without whose competence the Society could not operate. In particular he wished to thank the retiring members, Sarah Hart and Nigel White.

v) As ordinary member of Council, Sarah Hart had made a tremendous impact on the Society, how it is run, procedures for awarding prizes, the meetings it organizes, and so on. She also initiated the BSHM Birkbeck meeting, now one of the most successful if not the most successful meeting on the calendar of the Society. And we also had Sarah to thank that we are able to hold Council meetings and the AGM at Birkbeck. Sarah was leaving Council ahead of time on account of the many other tasks associated with having been made Head of Department of Economics, Mathematics and Statistics here at Birkbeck. Council was very pleased that Sarah would continue to organise and host the Birkbeck meeting as well as facilitate the holding of Council meetings and the AGM in these rooms.

vi) Council was also very pleased that Nigel White, who had been a first rate Treasurer and had likewise contributed enormously to the Society (and not just by making sure that we live within our means), will continue on Council for another year, although he is stepping down as Treasurer at the end of December.

e) As **Meetings Secretary**, Jane Wess whetted our appetites with the promise of meetings to come: the Christmas Meeting on 3rd December, with a host of interesting papers; *The Thomsons, a Mathematical Family*, on Saturday 18 February in Belfast; *Research in Progress* in Oxford on Saturday 25 February; the Birkbeck meeting on Saturday 27 May, *A History of Mathematical Logic in honour of Ivor Grattan Guinness*; the Rewley House meeting on Saturday 24 June, *Picturing Mathematics*; and more to come.

The motion that **the Officers' Reports and accounts be accepted as the true record of BSHM 2015 business** was **proposed** by Robin Wilson and **seconded** by Leo Rogers. The motion was passed **nem. con.**

5. Election of Council for 2016

The names of the nominated Council for 2016 together with their biographies had been circulated to all members. No BSHM member had subsequently asked for anyone else to be nominated. They are as follows:

President	Philip Beeley
Treasurer	Klaas Sijbrandij
Secretary	Fenny Smith
Membership Secretary	Ken Lord
Meetings Coordinator	Jane Wess
Education Officer	Mark McCartney
Publicity and Webmaster	Rosie Cretney
Elected (ordinary) members of Council	Dorothy Leddy Christopher Hollings Snezana Lawrence
Co-opted members of Council	Isobel Falkner Nigel White
Co-opted JMC Representative	June Barrow-Green

Note 1) Tony Mann continues as Bulletin Editor but will not be a permanent member of Council

The motion that the **nominated Council be adopted** was **proposed** by Robin Wilson and **seconded** by Peter Griffiths. The motion was passed **nem. con.**

6. Appointment of Andrew Thurnburn & Co., 38 Tamworth Road, Croydon, as the Society's accountants and independent examiners

The Treasurer, Nigel White, confirmed that the Society's accountants and independent examiners, Andrew Thurnburn & Co, continued to prove most satisfactory and Council strongly supported their re-appointment. The motion that **Andrew Thurnburn & Co be re-appointed as the Society's accountants and independent examiners** was **proposed** by Martin Perkins and **seconded** by Robin Wilson. The motion was passed with the one conventional abstention of the retiring Treasurer.

7. Vote of thanks. The Secretary proposed a formal vote of thanks to our retiring Council members, Sarah Hart and Nigel White, for their hard work and many achievements while in office. This was resoundingly given.

8. Any other business

Items occurring were:

a) Meeting reports and archives, that had once been on the internet, but that had disappeared after installation of the new website. Council undertook to consider how best to restore these, when appropriate.

b) There was some lively discussion on the purpose and management of Research in Progress. The question was raised as to who was invited to present papers at that meeting, and what provisions there were for longstanding Society members to do so. It was pointed out that Research in Progress was essentially a forum for up and coming scholars to present their work. However, Council would consider how in future to accommodate the needs for members of the Society to present their research to a wider audience.

c) The Society expressed our delight at the awarding of the Otto Neugebauer Prize to Professor Jeremy Gray at the 7th European Congress of Mathematics, in Berlin. This prize is awarded for a highly influential article or book in the field of the history of mathematics that enhances our understanding of either the development of mathematics or a particular mathematical subject in any period and in any geographical region. Jeremy's citation is as follows: "Jeremy Gray is one of the (if not the) leading historian of modern mathematics. His highly original, extensive, and deep body of work on 19th and 20th century mathematics has greatly advanced our knowledge about this period"

7. The meeting closed at 2.30 pm.

Fenny Smith, Hon. Secretary
2nd November 2016