

Mere Historical Society

Minutes of the AGM held on Tuesday 4th April 2023 in the Grove Building

Present: Chair (Peter Landymore), Committee Members: Graham Avory, David Bett, Simon Edkins, Diane Ellis, Derek Fisher, Hamish Bell, plus approximately 60 members

1 Apologies: None

2 Minutes of the AGM of 5th April 2022 had been published on the Mere Historical Society website at www.merehistoricalsociety.org.uk . These were unanimously approved by those present for signature by the Chair. Proposer: Caroline Cook; Seconder: Graham Avory.

3 Matters Arising: None

4 Reports to the AGM:

4.1 Chair's Report (Peter Landymore):

The Chair welcomed the members and said that his full report would be posted on the Society's website and copies were available on request. He went on to give an outline of the key points as follows:

- This AGM was particularly important as a revision to the Constitution was proposed.
- Membership has held up well in the second year since the covid pandemic and is around 100.
- The Chair thanked Simon Edkins for improvements to communication and the new membership card.
- The Subscription has remained at £10 and represents good value with 11 talks this year.
- The Chair thanked the website manager, Steve Hoffman, for the support he gives to maintain and update the website.
- The Society has still not been able to appoint a Visits Co-ordinator and is keen to resume the programme of summer visits. The Chair appealed for volunteers, perhaps to share this role.
- The Chair stated that after careful consideration, the Committee had unanimously agreed to transfer the Michael Tighe Historical Society Archive to Mere Museum under two conditions: first, that it remains a distinct collection within the Museum; and second, that it is rationalised to be more manageable and relevant under the joint supervision of the Museum and Derek Fisher, who is currently the Society's Archivist. As the Archive has lost its previous home in the refurbished United Reform Church, this would safeguard its future in Mere in suitable climate-controlled conditions. He foresaw that the proposed transfer would also offer the prospect of more collaboration with the Museum. He explained that this would necessitate a change to the Constitution and would need the approval of the Membership. Other minor changes to the Constitution were also proposed, regarding gender specific language and updating the authorisation of payments.
- The Chair concluded by thanking the Members for their continued support of the Society.

4.2 Treasurer's Report (Derek Fisher):

- The Treasurer's Report and Final Accounts for the Year ending 2022 had been circulated to the Committee and copies are available upon request. A copy will be posted on the Mere Historical Society website at www.merehistoricalsociety.org.uk . Thanks to Judy Bickerstaff for checking the Accounts.
- The Treasurer said that activity had been relatively unexceptional and there was a healthy balance on the accounts with reserves standing at just over £5000. The Society was able to retain the Subscription at £10.

- He confirmed, in answer to a question, that it had been decided to close the deposit account as the interest earned was so little.
- The Accounts were unanimously accepted by the meeting. Proposer: Dick Morris; Seconder: Simon Edkins.

5 Election of Committee: No new nominations had been received. The current Committee members introduced themselves to the meeting including the newly appointed Vice-Chair, Graham Avory. The Chair asked for the current members to be re-elected en bloc. This was agreed unanimously. Proposer: Julia Mottershaw; Seconder: Vernon Phillips.

6 Revision of the Constitution: The proposed draft revised Constitution had been circulated to members and copies were available for the meeting. The Chair explained that the main change was to delete the reference to the Archive to enable its transfer to the Mere Museum (see Chair's Report 4.1).

The Chair invited Rose Heesom, Curator of Mere Museum, to address the meeting. Rose stated that she had been Curator since 2019. The Mere Historical Society Archive is the Collection of Michael Tighe and consists of documents, objects and some 6000 photos. The Museum accesses it from time to time, for example in response to enquiries or for exhibition. It will be safer, more efficient and more effectively conserved if the Collection is kept as a discrete and separately-indexed archive within the Museum's collection. There is a problem of limited storage space. Much of the Collection is not relevant to Mere and it needs rationalising so that only Mere-related material is retained. Rose will undertake this task with Derek Fisher.

A number of questions arose from the Members:

- 1 Responding to a question about the fate of items not related to Mere, Derek explained that such items would be returned to the relevant areas.
- 2 Responding to a question about the deletion of all reference to the Archive in the Constitution, the Chair reiterated that this was necessary as the Archive would no longer be the responsibility of the Mere Historical Society and would no longer be encompassed within its objects.
- 3 Responding to a question about supporting the Archive financially, Derek confirmed that the Society is considering a donation to the Museum to support the Collection.
- 4 Responding to a question about what would happen to any new items for the Archive, Rose stated that nothing has been added to the Michael Tighe Collection since his death and nothing more will be added to it.

The proposed changes to the Constitution were unanimously agreed by the Members. A copy of the revised Constitution is added to these Minutes.

7 AOB: The Chair thanked Rose Heesom for joining the Meeting. There was no further business.

Signed as a true record:

Date:

MERE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CONSTITUTION & RULES

1. **NAME:** The name of the Society shall be the Mere Historical Society.
2. **OBJECTS:** The objects of the Society shall be to foster interest in history in general and in Mere and district in particular. It will do this by arranging Lectures and Talks and by organising visits to relevant places of interest.
3. **MEMBERSHIP:** Membership of the Society shall be open to anyone on application to the Membership Secretary and payment of the annual subscription.
4. **SUBSCRIPTION:** The annual subscription shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and be payable on the 1st April each year, or on joining. A member joining on or after 1st January in any year shall not be required to pay a further subscription until 1st April of the following year. A member whose subscription is more than 12 months in arrears shall be deemed to have resigned from the Society.
5. **CONDUCT OF AFFAIRS:** The affairs of the Society shall be conducted by a Committee consisting of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and such others as the Committee deems necessary. Five Committee members, including the Chair and/or Vice-Chair, shall form a quorum.
6. **ELECTION OF COMMITTEE:** The election of members to the Committee shall take place at the AGM. Committee members shall hold office until the next AGM, when they will be eligible for re-election. The Committee may co-opt additional members at any time.
7. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** The AGM shall be held in March or April each year and the business to be transacted shall include:
 - (a) The presentation by the Committee of a report on the affairs of the Society.
 - (b) The presentation of checked accounts by the Treasurer.
 - (c) Any business of which notice has been given by any member of the Society in writing to the Secretary at least two weeks before the date of the Meeting.
 - (d) The election of a Committee.
8. **EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (EGM):**..The Committee may at any time, or at the request of any twenty members in writing to the Secretary, convene an EGM. At such a Meeting only the business specified shall be considered.

9. **CONDUCT OF GENERAL MEETINGS:** At all General Meetings (AGM or EGM) the chair shall be taken by the Chair, Vice-Chair or other Committee member chosen by the Meeting.
- (a) A majority of at least two-thirds of those present shall be necessary to delete, alter or make additions to the Rules of the Society or to dissolve the Society, provided that at least one quarter of the total membership of the Society is present.
 - (b) All other resolutions shall be decided by a majority vote. Twenty members present shall form a quorum.
10. **FINANCE:**
- (a) The financial year of the Society shall end on 31st December in any year.
 - (b) An account in the name of the Society shall be maintained at a bank to be approved by the Committee.
 - (c) Cheques drawn on the Society's account may be signed, or electronic bank payments authorised, only by named officers agreed by the Committee to include the Treasurer and Chair. A minimum of two officers will be required to authorise each payment.
11. **DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY:** In the event of the dissolution of the Society, all assets of the Society remaining after discharge of its liabilities shall be donated to an organisation whose aims are broadly similar to those of this Society, selected by the members at a General Meeting.

Diane Ellis
Secretary
11/01/2023