

NORTHUMBRIAN CAMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday, September 27, 2019

6.00 p.m.

**Royal Grammar School, Eskdale Terrace,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4DX**

MINUTES

Documentation circulated in advance (and available at the meeting):

Agenda; Minutes of the previous AGM (September 28, 2018); President's Report; Secretary's Report; Membership Secretary's Report; Treasurer's Report; Audited Accounts Statement covering August 1, 2018-July 31, 2019; Auditor's Report.

Attendance List.

An attendance list was circulated. Eighteen members plus seven guests attended the AGM.

Flyers & Newsletters.

Copies of flyers & booking forms for the three events up to Christmas (The Sage Pitmen Poets Concert, the Christmas Lunch & the Festive Afternoon Tea) as well as copies of our July newsletter were available. People were invited to take any of these away with them.

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence.

The President welcomed all members and guests to this the 2019 Annual General Meeting of the Northumbrian Cambridge Association.

Apologies for absence had been received from: George Astbury; Susan Austin (Treasurer); Julian Bates; Jay Bosanquet; Ray Brown; Heather Cordell; Christine Crompton; Colin Dunnighan; Tim Gray; Vinny Holden (Hon. Auditor); Stephen Lawson; Michael & Jane Lewis; Jenny Lewis; Chris & Ann Petrie; Rob Tindall; Alan Townsend; James Wright.

2. Minutes of previous AGM, September 28, 2018.

Minutes of the previous meeting had been sent out to members. Additional paper copies were available for members in the hall. There were no comments or amendments and the minutes were approved as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising.

George Hopper asked about the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) form, its distribution and return. The President reported that, following its issue last year to members, the forms had been also been made available at events, had been uploaded to the website and had been featured in the Newsletter.

There were no other matters arising that were not dealt with under subsequent Agenda items.

4. President's Report.

The President's report had been circulated to members and there was a paper copy for members available in the hall. A summary of the highlights is as follows:

As members will have seen from the report, we have had an action-packed year since we last held our AGM, with the 'Sixties Gold Final Tour' Concert at the Sage last November (arranged by Committee member, Heather Cordell), our Christmas Lunch at the County Hotel and Festive Afternoon Tea & Film at the Tyneside in December, our tour of the Lit & Phil, followed by a visit to the nearby University Technical College, and lunch at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, in February, our Annual Dinner at the Northern Counties Club in March, our visit to the Bowes Museum in April (arranged by NCA Committee member, Gilbert Cockton), our expedition to see the Chillingham Wild Cattle and our short and long walks thereafter in June, as well as our Tyne Cruise (both arranged by Committee members, Peter & Liz Atkins), and our Freshers' Welcome Party at Mincoffs (courtesy of Tim Gray) in September.

As before, this regular pattern of annual lecture, musical concert, festive events, winter outing, annual dinner, spring outing, spring walk, and summer outing offers something for everyone, and seems to suit our members and their guests for numbers to these events have been gradually climbing, and we've had record numbers for some events in this last year.

In addition, we've continued to look to the next generation of NCA members by holding two freshers' events, a welcome party in September for local students going up to Cambridge and a forthcoming reunion for them in December. Our outreach to these freshers is continuing to bear fruit, for no less than 43 students attended our Freshers' Welcome party this year.

Thanks go to the Cambridge University Development & Alumni Relations Office (CUDAR), with whom we now have a collaborative relationship, and who manage one of our two websites, for we currently hold contact details for the regional students who went up to Cambridge from 2016 onwards. We have been keeping in contact with them, have offered them free associate membership of the NCA, and are sending them our biannual newsletter in the hope that, should they return to the North East to take up their professional lives, they will become supportive members of the Association.

Gilbert Cockton continues to improve our main website, for which we are grateful, and write-ups and photographs of all our recent events will be available soon.

In conclusion, he reported that it had been an excellent year, therefore, but he also noted with regret the passing of one of our longtime members, John Saunders (St John's, 1958-61), who died on April 25, 2019. An 'In Memoriam' for him was included in the July newsletter.

The President asked if there were any comments or questions on the past programme, but there were only general murmurs of approval.

5. Hon. Secretary's Report.

The Hon. Secretary's Report had been circulated in advance and there were paper copies available in the hall. The Secretary highlighted the following forthcoming events:

Forthcoming events until the end of the year (2019):

- a) Autumn Concert, Sage, Gateshead (The Pitmen Poets, Sunday, November 24, 2019, 8 pm, Sage 2; organisers, Heather Cordell/Bill & Andrena Telford).

Members and guests are invited to join us for dinner and an evening of music, song and spoken word, with 'The Pitmen Poets', celebrating the triumphs, tragedy, humour and hard times of North-East England's coal mining tradition. The concert is at 8.00 and tickets are at a discounted rate of £20.00. We have also made a booking for 6.00 at the Sage Brasserie for those who would like to join us for a meal beforehand. Book by Wednesday, November 13 with the Secretary (flyers/booking forms available in the auditorium).

- b) Christmas Lunch, County Hotel, Newcastle (Friday, December 6, 2019; organisers, Bill & Andrena Telford).

Once again we have booked Christmas Lunch in the lovely Mozart Suite of the County Hotel, opposite Newcastle Central Station. The cost of the meal is £21.00 per person, including a glass of wine, juice or soft drink, and those who have been before will know what good value this is. The venue is delightful, the service is excellent and the company unparalleled! Bookings have been coming in already, so people should book soon (and by Wednesday, November 20 at the latest) to be sure of a place (flyers/booking forms were available on the table outside the Hall).

- c) Pre-Christmas Freshers' Reunion, Revolution (Wednesday, December 11, 2019; 5.30-19.00, organisers: Bill & Andrena Telford).

At the lively Freshers Party at Mincoffs on September 16, as already mentioned, 44 freshers turned up, and we plan to get together with them, on their return from their first term in Cambridge, on Wednesday, December 11, for a drink and chat at Revolution on Collingwood Street in Newcastle. We'll also be inviting the freshers from last year and from 2017. These young people are, hopefully, our future and we'd be very happy for NCA members to join us on the occasion. If you are able to come, please notify the Secretary beforehand so that we can give numbers to the restaurant. We usually treat the freshers to a cocktail or mocktail, but we rely on members to buy their own!

- d) Festive Afternoon Tea & Film, Tyneside Cinema, Newcastle (Saturday, December 14, 2019; organisers, Bill & Andrena Telford).

Our Festive Afternoon Tea and Film event at the Tyneside Cinema has been a highlight of the Christmas season for the past 6 years. Because of our regularity, we have been given a special discounted rate of £30.00 per person. This includes a truly scrumptious afternoon tea, a free glass of prosecco, a studio cinema to ourselves, Christmas décor, a bar and the undivided attention of two members of staff, as well as the film of our choice. This year's film is the classic 1952 drama, *The Holly and the Ivy* (running time: 83 minutes), starring Ralph Richardson, Celia Johnson, Margaret Leighton and Denholm Elliott. Bookings are coming in, so get your booking form to the Secretary as soon as possible, and by Wednesday, December 4 at the latest (flyers/booking forms available on the table outside the Hall).

Events planned for 2020 include (flyers to go out in January):

- a) Winter Outing, Discovery Museum, Newcastle (Saturday, February 8, 2020; organisers, Bill & Andrena Telford).

Next year's winter outing, on Saturday, February 8, will be to the Discovery Museum, Newcastle. We shall meet at 10.00 am at the Museum, which will be opening up early especially for us. After morning tea/coffee and biscuits at the Museum's cafeteria, we shall split into alternating groups for specialist tours, one to see the building and the other to visit the Museum's extensive costume store. There will also be time for everyone to explore the Museum on their own. We have also arranged a soup and sandwich lunch in a private room, the Carpathia room, at 12.45. The cost for the museum visit will be £15 per person, to include admission, the guided tour, and the soup and sandwich lunch (excluding drinks).

- b) Annual Dinner, Northern Counties Club, Newcastle (Wednesday, March 11, 2020; organisers, Bill & Andrena Telford).

This year's annual dinner of the Northumbrian Cambridge Association, on Wednesday, March 11, will be a special occasion, celebrating the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Association. Once again it will be held in the splendid surroundings of the Northern Counties Club in the centre of Newcastle, and will be a black-tie affair as usual. We expect the cost of the dinner to be commensurate with that of last year, viz. c. £38. After the dinner, there will be reminiscences of Cambridge and of the history of the Association and, of course, there will be another challenging quiz! We hope also to have some special guests join us for this significant event, as well as some other distinctive elements.

- c) Spring Outing, Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens, Ponteland (Saturday, April 18, 2020; organiser(s), Bill & Andrena Telford).

Our 2020 Spring Outing, on Saturday, April 18, will be to the Zoological Gardens, part of the Kirkley Hall Campus of Northumberland College, just outside Ponteland, and there members will have an opportunity to learn about the zoo's conservation policy, to see the many exotic animals, and to participate in small group animal (petting) encounters! After lunch in a room set aside for us in the Hall, we hope to have a guided tour of the beautiful walled garden. The cost is still being negotiated but we anticipate that it will be approximately £15-£20.

- d) Spring Walk, Raby Castle, County Durham (Saturday, May 16, 2020; organisers/leaders, Gilbert Cockton, Heather Cordell, Bill & Andrena Telford).

For our Spring Walk, on Saturday, May 16, we plan to meet for morning coffee at 10.00 in the Stable Cafe, at Raby Castle, followed by a tour of the castle, and, hopefully, a guided tour of the gardens. After lunch in the cafeteria, there will be the option of a shorter walk, guided by Bill and Andrena Telford, through the walled garden and around the perimeter of the castle, with views of Raby's famous herds of red and fallow deer. A longer walk will also be available, ranging further through the 200 acre estate. The cost has still to be negotiated, but we expect it to be in the normal range.

- e) Summer Outing, The Farne Islands (Sunday, June 21, 2020; organizers, Bill & Andrena Telford).

For our Summer Outing next year, on Sunday, June 21, we plan to meet for lunch at 12.00 at the Olde Ship Inn in Seahouses (a menu will be circulated ahead of time so that we can notify the hotel of your choices). Following lunch we will join a Serenity Cruises catamaran at 13.45 for a trip round the Farne Islands, with an hour's stop-off on Inner Farne to see the bird life nesting on the cliffs, the old lighthouse and St Cuthbert's Chapel. Members of the National Trust have free entry to the island; non-members will have to pay on disembarkation. We anticipate that the cost of the boat trip will be around £20 (2019 price).

The Secretary also reported on the following:

a) Newsletter.

The next of our twice-yearly newsletters is due out in January 2020. Contributions are especially welcome from members and should be directed to the Hon. Secretary by mid-December. Text contributions should preferably be between 200 and 500 words. Photographs are welcome, preferably in electronic form (but not necessarily – great care will be taken with prints).

b) Electronic Mailing.

Many of our members now receive event flyers, newsletters and other communications electronically, which saves a great deal of time and money on the part of the society. Members are requested if they have an email address and are willing to receive their NCA mail this way, to please make sure they include it in the attendance form or email the Secretary at: aeandwr.telford@btinternet.com.

c) Website.

As mentioned already, the website [www.northumbrian-cambridge.co.uk] is being regularly improved by committee member Gilbert Cockton. Members are encouraged to make it a regular source for information, along with our group page on the Cambridge Alumni site [<https://www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/group/northumbrian-cambridge-association>].

There were no comments or questions in relation to the Hon. Secretary's report. The President thanked the Hon. Secretary for her work on behalf of the Association.

6. Membership Secretary's Report.

The Membership Secretary's report had been circulated in advance, and there were copies in the auditorium. The main points of the report were as follows:

This year had seen a number of changes to the Association's membership. There had been several cancellations of membership, for various reasons (moving away, old age, reduced mobility), but also a number of new members (with others in the pipeline). The current membership was 180 ordinary members, 6 Honorary members and 4 Associate members. These last are partners of deceased NCA members who have regularly attended our events.

The President added that there were 141 on our email list and 36 on our postal list. Student associate members comprise 11 (2016), 28 (2017), 17 (2018), 45 (2019), making 101 in all. The President also welcomed three new members: Allan Colver and Michael and Jenny Lewis. There were no comments or questions following the Membership Secretary's Report. The President thanked Judy for her work as Membership Secretary throughout the year.

7. Hon. Treasurer's Report.

The Hon. Treasurer, Susan Austin, was unable to come to the AGM to give her Treasurer's report due to her daughter's wedding but the report had already been circulated, along with the Audited Financial Statement for August 1, 2018-July 31, 2019, and the Auditor's Report. The Treasurer's Report for the year 2018/2019 highlighted the following:

Subscription income had increased slightly from last year to just over £1000. Membership fees are the only source of regular income and enable the Association to organise events, pay advance deposits, fund Freshers' events free of charge to attendees and cover administrative expenses. Over 50% of subscriptions are now paid by standing order and another 30% by bank transfer, both of which are helpful in streamlining accounting records. The costing of events was intended, as far as is possible, to result in a break-even position; over the year, a small deficit on the 2018 AGM was balanced out by slight surpluses on some of the other events. The overall surplus of £297.49 mainly reflects the growth in membership income. Administrative expenses of £588 are up from £523 in 2018, due principally to increased costs of printing and postage, but are relatively stable. Given that the Association has already paid advance deposits for the 2019 AGM, Sage concert, Christmas lunch and Festive tea, the finances were in a healthy position for the current year.

The President added that the current balance of £2,219.74 as of 31.7.19 compared favourably with past balances: cf. £2,675 (31.7.18); £2,144.43 (31.7.17); £2608.71 (31.7.16). Approximately 60% of members had paid their subscriptions this year, and this was a considerable improvement on past years.

8. Auditor's Report.

The Hon. Auditor, Vinny Holden, was unable to be at the meeting, but the President read out his report, which had also been circulated beforehand (copies were also available in the hall). The auditor confirmed that the balance sheet and income and expenditure account presented by the Treasurer were accurate and reflected the current position of the bank account. There were no comments, questions or suggestions in relation to the Association's finances, and the Treasurer's report, the financial statement for 2018-19 and the Hon. Auditor's report were all accepted with a show of hands. On behalf of the Association, the President recorded thanks to Susan Austin (*in absentia*) for her work as Treasurer during this year, and also to our Hon. Auditor.

9. Election of Officers and Executive Committee.

Where the Election of Officers and the Executive Committee was concerned, the President pointed out that the constitution stated that the Officers of the Association (President, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Auditor) take office for one year and elections for these posts therefore take place annually at this time. He, as the current President, Andrena Telford as the current Hon. Secretary, Susan Austin, as the current Treasurer and Vinny Holden as the current Auditor, had all expressed their willingness to carry on for another year. On that basis, and with no other nominations, these re-elections were approved *nem. con.*

The President announced that he and the Hon. Secretary would be stepping down next year at the 2020 AGM to make way for another President and Hon. Secretary. He explained that they had held administrative responsibilities in a number of voluntary organisations, in addition to the NCA, throughout the period of their official retirement, that they planned to have a 'second retirement' from such responsibilities by the beginning of 2021, and had been giving notice to that effect to their other organisations

as well. In the course of the year, the President would be consulting with the members of the Committee, so that suitable nominations could be brought forward next September.

The constitution states that the Executive Committee should likewise be elected every year, and should consist of not more than seven and not less than five members of the Association. Four of the current Committee, Professor Heather Cordell, Colin Dunnighan, Professor Gilbert Cockton and Judy Vigurs, who has been co-opted as our Membership Secretary, were all willing to stand again, and these appointments were approved *nem. con.*

The President also announced that two of the current Committee, Professor Peter Atkins and his wife, Elizabeth Atkins, had decided to step down after three years of faithful service, including the organization of a number of enjoyable events, for which he thanked them most warmly.

Two new members had been approached to serve in their stead, Dr Peter Cleland (Selwyn, 1966-, Medicine) and Arnold Fairless (St. John's, 1964-67). Both had indicated their willingness to serve. Dr Peter Cleland was proposed by Gilbert Cockton and seconded by Wendy Bond. Arnold Fairless was proposed by Margaret Wilkinson and seconded by John Luke. There were no other nominations and both were elected by a show of hands.

The President concluded by thanking the Executive Committee for all their hard work for the Association during the course of this year.

10. Any Other Business.

In conclusion, the President reminded members of the attendance list, as well as the flyers for forthcoming events and the copies of the July 2018 Newsletter, which were all available to take away.

Prof. Peter Atkins rose to propose a hearty vote of thanks to the President who had worked so hard and served the society so well over the past year. This was warmly applauded.

There was no other business and so the President declared the AGM over.

Meeting closed: 6.30.