

Annual General Meeting of the Cumbria Local History Federation

Saturday 6th October 2018 at Newbiggin Village Hall, Penrith

Present: Peter Roebuck (PR), Chairman; Lyn Cole (LC), Secretary; John Poland (JP), Treasurer; Liz Kerrey (LK), Membership Secretary and Website Co-ordinator; Nigel Mills (NM), Bulletin Editor; June Hill (JH), Events Organiser; Graham Brooks (GB), Website Co-ordinator; Richard Brockington (RB); and Adrian Allan (AA); 60 people present.

There were no apologies.

1. PR welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined some of the important items of business of the meeting, particularly the need for a new constitution. If approved this would allow CLHF to apply for charitable status which will bring many benefits to CLHF and its members.

2. The minutes of the 2017 AGM held on Saturday 14 October 2017 in the Band Hall, Askam in Furness were approved and signed.

3. Matters arising from the minutes. There were no matters arising.

4. Reports for 2017/2018

Report from the Chairman

PR reported on the activities that had taken place over the year. These included continued development of the new website, with training provided for two committee members; feedback visits to local groups; the introduction of guided museum visits and Training Workshops; and developing further links with CWAAS, VCH Cumbria, and the Cumbria Archive Service. A decision was made to seek charitable status and to revise our Constitution. Peter thanked members of the Committee for their work and asked Federation members for their continued support.

Membership Secretary's report

Liz Kerrey reported that membership had increased to 54 member groups and 47 individual members. She congratulated some very active member groups and reminded both groups and members to keep contact details updated, especially in the light of GDPR.

Treasurer's report

John Poland reported that the accounts showed a loss of £995.50 for the year, but without the website set up costs of £889.94 the loss would be £105.56 compared to a surplus of £85.73 in the previous year. Bulletin costs have increased. If charitable status is achieved this would increase the potential for raising of funds.

NB: Full reports on separate sheets below

5. Annual Subscriptions

The Committee recommended that annual subscriptions to the Federation be raised as follows: Individual Membership from £8 to £10; Group Membership from £12 to £15 (Each individual member and each group to receive one copy of the Bulletin, with the option of purchasing others; an e-mailed copy to be issued to all group contacts; and a copy to be placed on the website). Graham Brooks proposed these increases and June Hill seconded it. This was unanimously agreed by the meeting.

6. New Constitution & Charitable Status

John Poland explained that in order for the Federation to achieve charitable status it was necessary to adopt a revised Constitution. Richard Brockington proposed, and Jenni Lister seconded that the Federation adopt the draft Constitution put before the meeting, and endorse its submission to the Charity Commission. This was unanimously agreed.

Pending registration as a charity, it was proposed to endorse the following individuals, recommended by the Committee to the general membership, as the first elected Trustees to assume office from the date of registration: Jill Wishart, (former Chairman of CLHF), and Dr Jane Platt. The CLHF Chairman is also a Trustee ex officio. This was unanimously agreed.

The new Constitution can be viewed on the CLHF website www.clhf.org.uk

7. Election of Officers & Members of the Committee Present Committee:

The following were re-elected for 2018-2019:

Chairman: Peter Roebuck; Secretary: Lyn Cole; Treasurer: John Poland;

Committee Members: Adrian Allan; Richard Brockington; Graham Brooks; June Hill; Liz Kerrey; Nigel Mills.

There were no nominations for the vacancy caused by the withdrawal from the Committee of Jenni Lister. Many thanks are due to Jenny for her hard work for CLHF over many years.

Nigel Mills has done a very fine job over as editor of 15 issues of the Bulletin but has decided to step down from that role at the end of the year. A new editor is sought and suggestions or volunteers for the position are invited. Nigel will continue to serve as a Committee member.

It was proposed that from the next AGM, elections for Officers and Committee Members will be staggered in order to ensure continuity. These to take place ahead of the AGM. All were in favour.

8. Any other business

There was no other business.

The meeting was then closed and was followed by the Annual Convention.

CUMBRIAN LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION

Report from the Chairman for 2017-18

It has been a busy year with 7 meetings of the Committee and some fresh activities.

Having launched a new website, we have endeavoured to develop it, providing training for Liz Kerrey and Graham Brooks (a new member of the Committee) who oversee it. We can now add names to our very popular Directory of Speakers on demand as the need arises. Increasingly we will place both topical items (such as Convention details) and more long-lived ones (such as our Guide to Good Practice in Booking Speakers) on the site and, more generally, attempt to keep it fresh and interesting.

The Guide emerged from our visits to six of our member groups in the autumn and winter, seeking feedback on our efforts, an exercise which proved valuable and which will be further developed. Other outcomes were three guided museum visits open to members: the Ruskin Museum at Coniston in June and, forthcoming, the Dent Heritage Centre in September and the Helena Thompson Museum in Workington in December. Training Workshops are also scheduled at Carlisle Central Library in January and at the Armit Library & Museum in Ambleside in April (where we will have presentations from the Librarian and from the Ambleside Oral History Group).

In addition to visiting some of our members we held talks with senior members of CWAAS, and more recently with the Cumbrian Archive Service. The first resulted in joint representation, on their Council and our Committee respectively; a consideration of how we might support the VCH Cumbria – the publication of volunteer profiles in our Bulletin is one result, the programme for our Convention is another; and a joint commitment to pursue the provision of formal training for local historians in Cumbria (in this connection we will promote the four-week Massive Open On-Line Course scheduled for October; and we will support the possibility of the resumption of a Certificate Course at Lancaster University in 2019-20). Our deliberations with CAS are designed to assist the Service to recover from the devastating cuts of recent years. CAS has identified 5 discreet listing projects for which they would like to recruit volunteers – the first was advertised in our last Bulletin; they accepted our proposal that all material in the Reference Section at Carlisle be included in a catalogue to be made available to all searchers; and Adrian Allan and I are contributing to an application for a major grant to finance the production of a single, comprehensive catalogue of the vast Musgrave Collection at Carlisle and Kendal.

Much time has been devoted to devising a more secure future for CLHF. While we are not in financial difficulties, we do not have much of a cushion against adverse circumstances and little leeway for capital developments: leaps forward (as with the website) are costly, although we managed to secure an absolute bargain. Our conclusion is that we should actively seek charitable status and to that end we need to revise our Constitution. If we achieve this, we will be able to further develop our activities on your behalf, to keep costs to you to a minimum, and thereby to flourish.

I thank members of the Committee for their sterling efforts. In difficult times for virtually everybody, the Federation can do a great deal of good and I ask for your continuing support of our efforts. We are always glad to hear from you.

Peter Roebuck

Membership Secretary's Report.

Membership shows an increase on last year, we now have 54 member groups and 47 individuals, and we are delighted to welcome back the Alston Moor Historical Society after a period of closure.

GDPR necessitated an interesting overhaul of our membership list. It's inevitable that key society members will move on and be replaced – but do remember to let me know when your contact details change! My CLHF email address is with the others at the foot of each page of our website www.clhf.org.uk , and our privacy policy can be seen at the foot of the 'About Us' page.

We do have several very active groups – congratulations! - and I am hoping that even more of you will be inspired by the training days we have planned for next year!

Best wishes to all!

CUMBRIA LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION

Treasurer's Report for year ended 30th June 2018

The loss for the year was £995.50, but without the website set up costs of £889.94, the loss is £105.56 in comparison to a surplus of £85.73 in the previous year.

It is encouraging that subscriptions from both groups and members show a modest increase. The Convention realised a lower surplus than the previous year at £116.30 in comparison to a surplus of £280.00 in the previous year. It is expected that Events, introduced this year may generate a small surplus.

Cost per bulletin has increased over the previous year reflecting an increase in postal costs, despite careful management and a reduction of print costs, resulting in an increase per bulletin of circa 20p. Other costs were broadly in line with previous years.

The closing balance, whilst reduced, is adequate when taking account of best practice guidelines.

The proposal to achieve charitable status as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation would see the Federation being regulated, but would raise the profile in the eyes of future funders, who may be more inclined to provide future financial support.

John H. Poland

26th August 2018