**Annual General Meeting of the Cumbria Local History Federation**

**Saturday 23rd October 2021 at Melmerby Village Hall**

**The meeting took place within the Annual Convention**

**Present:** Graham Brooks, Chairman and Website Co-ordinator; John Poland, Treasurer; Lyn Cole, Secretary; Liz Kerrey, Membership Secretary and Website Co-ordinator; Nigel Mills, Bulletin Editor; June Hill, Events Organiser; Adrian Allan, Archives; Ruth Lawley, VCH; Chris Craghill.

**1. GB welcomed everyone** to the meeting and outlined the items of business of the meeting,

**2**. **Apologies** were received from Jane Platt, Jill Wishart, Peter Roebuck, Rob David, Michael and Lorna Mullett.

**3**. **The minutes of the 2019 AGM** held on Saturday 5th October 2019 at Helena Thompson Museum, Workington were approved and signed.

**4**. **Matters arising from the minutes**. All matters arising are covered in the agenda.

**5.** **Report from the Chairman and Membership Secretary** *Most of you will be aware that Peter Roebuck had to step down from the post of Chair of the Federation due to ill health, and I would just like to take this opportunity to thank Peter for all his hard work in leading the Federation and bringing it to the position it was before Covid got in the way. I would also like to thank him for the support he has given me since I have taken over as Acting Chair.*

*I would also like at this point to thank our 2 independent trustees Jane Platt and Jill Wishart for the support they give the Federation. Unfortunately, neither can be with us today.*

*I would also like to thank June Hill and Liz Kerrey for the effort they have put in organising this convention, in theory twice, and all the other committee members who have helped.*

*The big project we were in the process of delivering before Covid, was the Managing Local Archives Project. This unfortunately came to a sudden halt when the Heritage Lottery Fund withdrew all their funding streams. However, I am happy to announce that we are looking to re-start a programme to help member societies take care of their archives. Together with Cumbria Archive Service and a private consultant, we are putting together a slightly curtailed programme, hopefully for spring next year. We are also seeking some new funding sources to cover the costs.*

*During Covid our membership secretary Liz Kerry has been busy sending out emails to keep members informed on what the Federation has been up to, and also the many zoom talks arranged by both local and national organisations. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Liz on your behalf for the work she has put in. Just because the world appears to be opening up, please don’t stop sending notification of your meetings either in person or by zoom and we will keep spreading them around the county.*

*The membership of the Federation stands at 54 groups and 36 individual members*

*Zoom has been a revelation to a lot of us, and some societies which have fully embraced it have had some astounding results. Don’t forget, if you want to use Zoom the Federation does have an account that can be used.*

*One of the highlights of the Federation is its Bulletin and this over recent years has developed into a very professional and high-quality publication, which delivers both news of the Federation and of the activities of our member societies. There is also some very interesting research published. I have to thank Nigel Mills for all his work in editing the Bulletin. However, Nigel has now retired from the post and we are desperately looking for a new editor. If there is any person out there who fancies taking it on, please have a chat with either me or Nigel.*

*Now that we have got this Convention underway, we can, Covid permitting, start planning our programme for the future. If there are any subjects that your society or members would like us to take up, please let us know.*

*One problem affecting the local history community is the recruiting of new committee members and planning for succession, to ensure the future of the societies. During Covid at least 2 societies have closed from lack of support for their committee. I am interested in possible ways that local societies can be helped by the Federation in these situations. However, for the Federation to provide that support, there is a need for the Federation to be strong and we therefore need more members for the federation committee. In addition to the Bulletin Editor position, any help available would be much appreciated especially with our web site and possibly social media. Other jobs are available if you feel you have any special talents you feel may be of use to us.*

*Finally, I would like to thank all the members of the committee that haven’t already been mentioned, for the help and support they have given both the Federation and myself over the last two years. They have attended meetings of a wide range of organisations as representatives of the Federation and I hope they will keep representing the Federation and putting Cumbrian local History to the fore.*

**6. Report from the Treasurer**

The meeting was asked to approve two years’ accounts i.e. year ended 30th June 2020 and 30th June 2021.

*1. Year ended 30th June 2020*

*The year ended with a surplus of £249.98 compared to a surplus of £139.69 in the previous year. Subscriptions from individual members showed an increase for the 3rd year. The Convention realised a surplus of £207.00 compared to £174.67 in the previous year. Events had to be curtailed in view of COVID 19. We appreciated donations from individuals, on which HMRC has allowed us to claim Gift Aid for the first time.*

*Cost per bulletin increased over the previous year, but careful management in reducing the numbers printed, resulted in a decrease of costs for the bulletin. Other costs were broadly in line with expectations. The closing balance is adequate and in line with best practice guidelines.*

*The biggest disappointment was that our application to the National Heritage Lottery Fund, after making good progress including a face-to-face meeting in Carlisle, was stopped. The application was deemed to be closed and withdrawn to allow focus on critical sites, which had lost their total income overnight due to the Covid pandemic. We appreciate the help and support of so many with this project.*

**The accounts were approved.**

*2. Year ended 30th June 2021*

*The year ended with a surplus of £278.09 compared to a surplus of £249.98 in the previous year. A great result as there was no income from a Convention or Events.*

*The Committee had made a decision not to charge subscriptions for the year, but to invite donations to ensure the Federation remained viable. The situation was greatly helped by HMRC allowing Gift Aid to be claimed on individual donations. We are grateful to individuals and Societies for their generosity, which exceeded the previous year’s subscriptions.*

*Cost per bulletin rose by 4%, but pagination increased by 32% to an average of 44 pages. Other costs were broadly in line, except website costs, which are for 2 years.*

 *The closing balance is adequate and in line with best practice guidelines.*

*Following the disappointment of the failure of our application to the National Heritage Lottery Fund, the Committee were advised not to submit a new application as our membership did not meet their criteria of sufficient diversity. The committee has been exploring how to take this project forward, following great support from our members. A significant anonymous donation has been received in the current year, which is helping us to focus on a smaller project.*

**The accounts were approved.**

*3. HMRC Gift Aid*

*We have received HMRC approval to claim Gift Aid on individual donations.*

*4. Lazonby History Society*

*Following the decision of Lazonby History Society to close, an agreement was reached between the Federation and the Society for the remaining funds to be handed over to the Federation. These funds will be ring fenced until 9th July 2026. If during this 5 year period the Society starts up again the funds will be handed over to their officers. After 5 years the Federation will decide on the outcome of the funds with a hope that a project linked to Lazonby could make use of these funds.*

*Adrian Allan has worked hard to ensure the Lazonby archives were handed over to the Archive Service.*

*The format of this agreement could be used if other societies were to close. We would like to place on record our thanks to the officers of the Lazonby Society, particularly Sheila Fletcher, for helping to bring about this satisfactory conclusion. All parties appear to be very satisfied with this outcome.*

*5. Election of Auditor*

*The existing Auditor, Mr Michael Coen, has indicated his willingness to continue.*

**Mr Michael Coen was approved to continue in office.**

*6. Subscriptions*

*It has been the practice for subscriptions to follow the calendar year and not our financial year, which is 1st July to 30th June. It has now been agreed to bring the subscription year in line with the financial year and, accordingly, subscriptions will run from 1st July 2021 to 30th June 2022. Subscription rates will remain the same at £15.00 for Societies and £10.00 for individuals. Donations from individuals accompanied by the correct form are eligible for Gift Aid.*

**7. Elections 2021 - 2022**

1. Independent Trustees - Jill Wishart was re-elected for a three-year period. Dr Jane Platt has a further year in office.
2. Election of Chair – Graham Brooks (proposed by John Poland, seconded by Nigel Mills).
3. Election of Secretary – Lyn Cole (proposed by Ruth Lawley, seconded by June Hill).
4. Election of Treasurer – John Poland (proposed by Nigel Mills, seconded by Alastair Robertson).
5. Election of Committee - Adrian Allan; June Hill; Liz Kerrey; Ruth Lawley; Nigel Mills; Chris Craghill (all proposed by Sheila Fletcher, seconded by Jenni Lister).

**All elections were carried unanimously.**

**Sheila Fletcher and Alastair Robertson were co-opted onto the committee.**

**8. Any other business** Graham Brooks thanked Alastair Robertson and Alston Moor Historical Society for their help in running the event.

The meeting was closed, and the Annual Convention resumed.