



The Surname Society

Draft minutes of the Annual General Meeting held online on Saturday 30 March 2019 at 6.00pm GMT

Present: Mandy Blake (Secretary, UK), Kirsty Gray (Chair, UK), Carole Steers (Social Media, UK), Sylvia Valentine (Vice Chair, UK), Roger Moffat, Chris Gilbert, David Want, Bernadette Cass, Trevor Rix, Lynda Chiotti, Mags Gauden, Karen Bailey, Gary Barton, Doug Beezley

Apologies: Colin Spencer (Webmaster, Spain), Teresa Pask, Stuart Pask, Abbie McDonough, Helen Smith, Jill Ball, Gill Stephens, Jennie Fairs, Liz Phillips

1. KG welcomed everyone. The minutes of last year's AGM were accepted unanimously, proposed by Karen Bailey and seconded by Roger Moffat.
2. Report from the Committee: This year's committee has comprised of Kirsty Gray (Chair), Sylvia Valentine (Vice Chair), Mandy Blake (Secretary), Carole Steers (Social Network Co-ordinator), and Colin Spencer (Webmaster). We have also been supported by postholders, Hilary Gadsby (Treasurer) and Jennie Fairs (Newsletter Editor).

Kirsty reported: "We are extremely grateful to our volunteers who give their time freely. The Society was founded in November 2014 – I can hardly believe that's nearly five years ago! – to offer an innovative, collaborative, modern approach to the world of surname studies. Year on year our membership has grown and, given that our members can live anywhere in the world and access all society benefits, people continue to join us from all corners of the globe.

During the course of the society year, we have continued to hold members meeting regularly but we have moved over to a much better platform, GoToWebinar, which has much improved the quality of these meetings. I challenged myself to get back into my surname study more actively and presented a four-webinar series on 'starting over', we had Denise Colbert from FreeUKGenealogy and various others from our own Sylvia Valentine on Vaccinations records to David Jack on New Zealand sources and Lorna

Moloney on Irish Surnames, along with the annual Christmas Quiz (though this year, presented by Mandy Blake).

Members have been busy promoting the society and our members' studies around the world at events where possible with Jennie Fairs at many events in Australia, Jill Ball being a great travelling advocate of the society (joining up members at RootsTech this year) and again, Sylvia, Carole, Jill, Jennie, Hilary and I were at RootsTech 2018 and minus Sylvia, Hilary and Jennie, we were all there last month at RootsTech 2019 as well. Meeting physically at events is a great opportunity to extol the virtues of our great society and we certainly see more visits to the website and member applications as a result.

We are lucky that many of our members and committee members are regular travellers to events across the globe to spread the society word in this way.

We will be attending THE Genealogy Show in June this year at the NEC in Birmingham and Carole is heading up the planning for The Surname Society stand. If anyone would like to attend and support with a few hours on the stand, there are T-shirts and tickets waiting for you. Please liaise with Carole.

Carole is our social media coordinator and frequently posts on both Twitter and Facebook, being a contributor to #Ancestryhour on regular occasions. If you are on Twitter or Facebook and not connected with society accounts, you are missing out! There are two society FB pages (one just for society members and one for the general public) and the @surnamesoc Twitter account. Standby Carole for an influx in followers and requests to join the groups!

As per the norm in society formation, we have stormed, normed and are now looking forward to further performing. However, we only have three people continuing on the committee this year – myself, Sylvia and Carole. Mandy is continuing as Membership Secretary but not as Secretary and will no longer be on the committee. Colin is also standing down as Webmaster. So, we are in need of other volunteers and rather swiftly please! Being on the committee itself, you do not have to have a 'portfolio' as such, but we do need a replacement webmaster and other volunteers to help move the society forward.

We would love to hear from you about what you would like to see the society provide/do etc. as well. It's your society!"

3. Society accounts: The Chair presented these and there were two questions from Trevor Rix; he asked for an explanation of Legacy income and outgoings, and of £100.24 for charges. KG explained that if conference speakers so wish, they can give permission for their presentations to be included in the Legacy library. Legacy then forward the income from views of these presentations to the Society, with the Society retaining 50% and passing the other 50% to the relevant speaker. The charges referred to are PayPal charges made on each membership subscription paid via this method. Mags Gaulden proposed that the accounts, as published, were accepted, seconded by Karen Bailey, and the vote was carried unanimously in favour.
4. The Committee for 2019 – 2020 will comprise of: Kirsty Gray (Chair), Carole Steers (Social Networking Co-ordinator) and Sylvia Valentine (Vice Chair). Non-committee postholders will be Jennie Fairs (Newsletter Editor) and Mandy Blake (Membership Secretary and pro-tem Treasurer).
5. Date of next AGM: 14 March 2020.
6. Any other business:

Roger Moffat asked if the time of the next AGM would be the same. KG confirmed that yes, it would be around the 6pm (GMT) time as this seems to suit most time zones.

During the course of the AGM, Roger Moffat very kindly stepped forward and volunteered to take on the role of Webmaster plus we had interest in the Secretary role, and also a member interested in volunteering later in the year.

We must also add our very grateful thanks to Marian Pierre-Louis from Legacy for giving up so much of her time to help us with our Conference last Saturday on GoToWebinar – it has been excellent and there have been very many favourable comments – as well as very grateful thanks to our fantastic speakers; Mags Gaulden, Liv Birgit Christensen, Daniel Smith-Ramos, and Linda Romeril.