



Draft Minutes

LLS Annual General Meeting, 13 July 2017

1) Welcome

2) **Apologies:** Adam Hansen, Susie Thomas, Eliza Cubitt, Nicholas Tredell, Brycchan Carey, Rebecca Hahn

3) **Minutes of previous meeting:** Approved

4) **Matters arising:** None

5) Reports on the year's work from:

a) **President:** JB reflects on her activity of handing over the role of President to MD over the past year. Remarks that there has been some slow movement with the journal over the past year due to changing roles and responsibilities, and apologises to those any members who have been effected by these complications.

b) **Vice President:** MD pleased to announce that the winner of the Presidents' Prize is Emily Soon (KCL) for her essay, 'From Cathay to London: Reinscribing the Globe in John Harington's *Orlando Furioso*' presented at the 2016 Conference 'London and the Globe.' Emily will collect her prize at this year's conference. Also announces that conference bursaries have been awarded to three post-graduate students, two of whom are international students.

c) **Secretary:** LR reports that the principle responsibilities over the past year have been responding to email enquiries, making connections with other organisations such as the London Society, and compiling and sending out the newsletter. She also comments that she has been using Mailchimp to promote the Society's events, such as the LLRG and the Conference. Enquires as to whether the newsletter should continue to be distributed to members. JB comments that in its new incarnation it is a valuable and attractive incentive to membership, and commends LR on her work in this respect.

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d) **Treasurer:** NB remarks that he is pleased with the activities arranged and managed by the LLS this year and regards the Society's financial position to be satisfactory. Notes that we are back in the black, although membership is down slightly. The Society's unrestricted reserves at 30 June 2017 amounted to **£4256.66**. There were no restricted reserves, making total reserves £4256.66. There were 79 paid-up members of the Society at 30 June 2017 (88 at 30 June 2016). Notes that we have found a new treasurer who will be elected at the AGM. Comments that there is a surplus of £377 for this year's budget, and as such the society will be able to meet the cost of our activities for the next 12 months.

Please refer to "Financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017" for more details. Notes reserves and activity – refer to financial reports.

e) **Journal Editor:** BL notes the next editions of the journal are forthcoming and remarks that next year the journal will certainly have more momentum. JB acknowledges the journal editor post is a big job and that we might concern ourselves with other kinds of expressions of our member's research: for instance, the potential of developing the website with blog style writing and reviews. JB explains that we plan to have a special edition based on the 'Fantastic London', as well as another more general issue. JB Notes that we will stick with the current iteration of the journal for the forthcoming year, and explore alternatives for disseminating research in the future.

JB explains that NB will take on the role of editor of the Literary London Journal in the interim, while the process of establishing a new editor is underway. JB solicits interest in the position of journal editor and comments that it would best suit someone with editorial experience.

f) **Reviews Editor:** No report. The committee acknowledges there are articles and reviews waiting for publication.

g) **Conference Organiser:** PJ reports on working on this year conference and reflects that his new role at the IHR has allowed him the opportunity to bring some creative elements to the conference this year. For instance, 'Talking Orwell', which was organised together with Duncan Hay from the Bartlett Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis. PJ also notes that Leila Kassir has developed a special exhibition of appropriate and rare materials relating to the conference from the Senate House collections. The exhibition, 'Room 101', is located in Room 101 of Senate House. PJ notes that there was some difficulty with the submission of conference proposal this year but this has now been addressed. Summarises that this year we have an international line-up of speakers this year and exciting events. Comments that with this year's programme he attempted to push the scholarly scope of the conference, and made extra effort promoting the conference.

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h) **Web Editor:** JB notes that website has been revamped and the society, as of last year, has a new logo. CM comments that although the website work is mostly over there has been some maintenance issues with the website over the past year. Remarks also that there was this year some difficulty with submitting paper proposals via the website, but this has been resolved and new systems will be investigated in the coming year. CM comments also that the Society is thinking about producing live web content that might supplement the journal, and also that he and BL have been working to list the journal with directory of open access journal.

i) **Overseas Rep:** (via email) RH reports that there have been two sessions at the Literary London Reading Group in Tübingen: the first, on Richard Marsh's *The Beetle* which was introduced by Eliza Cubitt, and the second on Tom McCarthy's *Remainder* introduced by Caio Yurgel. Notes that she will contribute a brief write-up on the LLRG Tübingen's activities for the next LLS Newsletter.

j) **Postgraduate and Early Career Reps** (including LLS reading group) (via email): EC reports that there have been again six sessions this year, all of which were well attended. This included a PhD student (Heather Scott, UCL) and a non-academic specialist (Chris Woodley, playwright). EC remarks that this inclusivity addresses in part what the IES aims at in terms of widening participation. She notes that there were also several established academics who introduced sessions, including Naomi Hetherington, Lisa Mullen, Helena Goodwyn, and Lauren Elkin. Reports that the LLRG continues to average a dozen participants and each session attracts newcomers, while the core group ensures that everyone feels confident making contributions; also there are some new postgrads among our core group this year. EC thanks LR for taking charge of the final session of the year. Announces that the nominees for future LLRG organisers/ postgrad reps are Alex Grafen (UCL) and Wendy Toole (IHR). Both are PhD students working on very exciting projects themselves, both regular attendees at the LLRG. Suggests that for this reason they will be great representatives for the society. EC and LR have both spoken to them about the nature of the role. EC notes that this is her final report as organiser of the LLRG and thanks everyone for their support during her tenure.

6) Receive the audited accounts of the Society: Pending

7) Elect officers and ordinary members to vacant positions on the Executive Committee

Nominations for the following positions were approved:

Vice President: Peter Jones (nominated by Jenny Bavidge; seconded by Martin Dines)

Treasurer: Daniel Weston (nominated by Nick Bentley, seconded by Peter Jones)

Journal Editor: Nick Bentley (informal interim tenure)

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Conference Organiser: Matthew Ingleby (nominated by Jenny Bavidge; seconded by Nick Bentley)

8) Ratify the appointment of appointed members of the Executive Committee

The following posts were ratified:

Post-Grad Representatives: Alex Grafen and Wendy Toole

9) Provide a formal occasion for members to question the Executive Committee

Comment from member about the possibility of promoting the conference more broadly, especially reaching out to international audiences. Member suggests approaching people in leadership positions of organisations, and speaking directly to people in universities.

Question from members about our social media presence, specifically whether the Society uses Twitter to promote its activities. PJ responds that the LLS Twitter account currently has 2,384 Twitter followers and the LLRG Twitter account has 516. The LLS Facebook, which is less active, has 626 members.

PJ explains that Twitter allows us to connect with an international audience, particularly individuals who cannot attend the conference. Encourages delegates to use the LitLon hashtag.

Member suggests that Instagram might be a good way to generate new interest.

PJ suggests that we might have a photographer come in for the conference, and these images could be posted to the Instagram account.

Member notes that the conference might include outreach events such as a literary walk on the days before or after the conference, especially for delegates who arrive early.

MI suggests this might be a good idea for next year, but notes would have to split delegates into smaller groups.

Member questions the dates of LLS conference, which regularly clashes with the Dickens Society conference.

PJ notes that we are at the behest of the IES in terms of dates, and therefore struggle to avoid all possible clashes. Comments that the conference dates change from year to year.

Member replies that it might be a good idea to stay outside the school holidays.

Member suggests financial resources to help interested undergraduates to attend the conference, as these students might eventually become members of the society.

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MD notes that there have been groups of undergraduates in the past who attended with a faculty member. Also comments that the reading group is open to undergraduates, and this is our other principle outreach activity.

PJ suggests that seminars or workshops for undergrads might be a way to get them involved.

Member offers an endorsement of teaching resources on the website and suggests that future conference might include panels on pedagogy.

MD suggests that there have been two in the past, but that we should continue to do this.

Member asks whether we might develop or extend the creative writing element of the conference.

PJ notes that there is a panel dedicated to creative writing at this year's conference.

MI suggests the journal might help to address interest too, and publish member's creative efforts.

10) **Transact any other business of an annual nature**

None

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