The Anthony Powell Society

Patron: John Powell
President: Hugh Massingberd

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

15 September 2001
The George Hotel, Nunney, Somerset

Present: Christine Berberich, Saul David, Sue Frye, Marianne Hinton, Stephen Holden (SH), Catherine Mansel Lewis (CML), Keith Marshall (KM), Noreen Marshall, Hugh Massingberd (HMM), Maggie Noach (MN), John Powell (JP), Aldon Rees, Tony Robinson (TR)

Apologies: Cheryl Bove, Julie Gerrard, Julian Allason, Ian Young, Georgina Pritchard, William B Warren, James Tucker, Kathleen White, Elizabeth Savidge, Douglas Law, Derek Miles, David Lowis, Robert Rollason, Jean Rollason, John Monagan, Nick Birns, Nigel Maxwell, Simon McArthur, Leatrice Fountain, C 'Ripples' Massingberd, AN Wilson, Josandra Janisch, Cathy Steg, Tom Wallace, Tom Sutherland, Joanne Edmonds, Tony Edmonds

1. Welcome

A. Keith Marshall (KM), Hon. Secretary, welcomed everyone to the inaugural AGM, and reminded everyone that AP himself used to bring visitors to dine at the hotel.
B. There not yet being a formally elected Chairman of the Society, Keith Marshall (KM) proposed that Maggie Noach (MN) chair the meeting. Seconded by Stephen Holden (SH) and adopted.
C. MN introduced herself, and reminded everyone of AP's description (in *The Military Philosophers*) of the Service of Remembrance at St Paul's Cathedral which is similar to those which had been held in New York this week following the events at the World Trade Centre.

2. Formally Adopt Society Constitution

A. KM introduced the Society's draft Constitution (available in advance) and proposed that it be adopted. Seconded by SH. The Constitution was unanimously adopted (all present, plus 18 proxy votes in favour, plus three "open" proxy votes which the chairman of the meeting cast in favour).

3. Receive the Annual Report & Accounts

A. KM presented the Annual Report & Accounts (distributed in advance) for the period ending 31 March 2001. He summed up the Society's first year as a tremendous success. Particular thanks were expressed to the Powell family, particularly John and Lady Violet, for their support and enthusiasm; similarly Hugh Massingberd (HMM), who had also been the speaker at the immensely

enjoyable lunch which had taken place at the London Ritz on the eve of the Conference; the original Committee and those who had worked on the 2001 Conference which had taken place at Eton College.
B. Although outside the reporting period, it was noted that the Conference had been a great success and, thanks to SH securing a research grant from The London Institute for the publication of the Proceedings, will probably break even. KM and George Lilley are working on the Proceedings at present, and it is hoped that they will be published in time for Christmas. Mention was also made of the Powell family's subsequent depositing of Powell's MSS at Eton College Library.
C. Looking forward, Michael Meredith, Eton College Librarian, has offered a small group of Society members the chance to visit Eton in 2002 to view the AP MSS. Tom Sutherland, Chairman of the Library Committee at the Travellers Club, has offered to host an event there next year (AP was a member, elected in 1930).
D. With respect to the Society's finances, the Accounts show a healthy bank balance at the end of the financial year, but KM reminded members of the comment of the Treasurer, Ian Young, that some of this is still to be disbursed as Conference costs. Ian Young had recommended that membership subscriptions be fixed at the current rates for at least the next year.
E. Catherine Mansel Lewis (CML) asked about likely size of the Travellers Club and Eton College events. KM suggested that one might be used for the occasion of the next AGM, the other for a dinner/reception (HMM suggested with a speaker).
F. MN asked whether the Travellers Club would object to business being conducted there; HMM, as a member, said that he thought not, citing his forthcoming book-launch there.
G. Tony Robinson (TR) asked if the membership had increased proportionately in all grades, and in particular whether there were any more Gold members. KM said that he thought not: the Founder Member category is closed, and most people are paying the basic subscription.
H. KM and MN proposed formal adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts, and this was unanimously agreed (voting figures as above).

4. Confirm Appointments of Patron and President

A. MN and KM expressed the Society's delight that John Powell (JP) was willing to be our Patron and Hugh Massingberd (HMM) to be President. The appointments were agreed (voting as above).

5. Election of Society Officers

A. The following nominations had been made:
Chairman: Maggie Noach
Secretary: Keith Marshall
Treasurer: Ian Young
There being no other nominations the above were elected unopposed.

6. Elect up to 4 Committee Members

A. Stephen Holden, Leatrice Fountain (LF) and Nick Birns (NB) had been nominated and elected unopposed as Committee members. Julian Allason and Noreen Marshall have stood down from the original Committee.

B. As LF and NB are both in the USA, KM took the opportunity to assure members that non-UK representatives have the opportunity to express their opinions via the committee's email discussion list, and to remind them that there have even been complete e-meetings before now.

C. MN asked about additional committee members. KM said that the constitution allowed for up to four elected committee members.

D. As Tony Robinson is involved in the work on gaining charitable status, KM nominated him for the committee. TR agreed to serve, and was seconded by SH. Voting was unanimously in favour.

7. Appoint 2003 Conference Project Manager

A. KM was nominated and elected unopposed as Project Manager of the 2003 Conference at Balliol College, Oxford.

8. Any Other Business

A. KM asked JP to update us on the afternoon's events. JP replied that at 3.30pm there would be a short service to dedicate the memorial to AP in Chantry Church. All were welcome to attend the service and Lady Violet had invited those present to The Chantry for tea afterwards.

B. Balliol College, Oxford has been booked for the 2003 Conference. Keynote speakers already signed up are Tom Wallace (AP's American editor) and DJ Taylor. Funding is still being sought: HMM suggested Christopher Ondaatje, who is also a Committee member at the Travellers Club and has just bought *The Literary Review*, which might be a good source of new members. He also mentioned *The Spectator*, and that Mark Amery would be keen to promote the Conference; MN added that *The Spectator* tends to offer discounts for multiple advertisements. *The Oldie* was also suggested. HMM had been asked to write a sketch on the 2001 Conference for *The Spectator*, but had so far been unable to do so because of ill health this summer. It was suggested that he might still write it, hung on today's AGM or the publication of the Conference Proceedings.

C. CML asked about the format of the Proceedings. KM showed a draft of the cover and said that it would be spiral bound in card covers. Delegates had already paid for their copies and would be mailed them accordingly; the rest of the copies would be available for sale (price probably in the region of £10). It was suggested that likely sources of publicity for the Proceedings might be AN Wilson and DJ Taylor (whose piece on the conference is being reprinted as the Introduction to the Proceedings).

D. MN said that she was struck by the calibre of the membership, but felt it important to increase the Society's membership, both to spread the word

about AP, and to raise revenue. She will be trying to promote the books via contacts at the Frankfurt Book Fair. MN suggested that everyone go through their address books for prospective members and she will draft a suggested standard letter for those who wish to use it. KM can provide membership leaflets on request. Sue Frye suggested that with Christmas coming up, it would be worthwhile to organise a gift membership scheme; KM committed to look at this.

E. MN asked about publishing the Mark Boxer cover illustrations of the Fontana edition of *Dance* as postcards. Mark Amery is the person who needs to be approached for permission, and KM asked HMM if he would do this. HMM mentioned the Osbert Lancaster cover illustrations for the Penguin edition of *Dance* for the same purpose: Lady Lancaster (aka. Anne Hastings, Anne Scott-James), may be the copyright holder.

F. KM and TR have been looking into the question of charitable status for the Society. On current membership figures this would be worth around £750 per year to the Society. MN proposed that the Society seek to move to charitable status.

G. The meeting was adjourned for lunch after which KM auctioned a copy of *Summary* (Vol 1, No1) that was largely devoted to AP. The successful bidder was MN. The auction raised £25 for the Society.