The Anthony Powell Society

Registered Charity No.: 1096873

Minutes of Annual General Meeting
Saturday 25 October 2008
The Wheatsheaf, 25 Rathbone Place, London W1

Present: Dr Christine Berberich (Chairman), Dorothy Davie, Graham Davie, Patric Dickinson, Paul Farrell, Dr Derek Hawes, Stephen Holden (Trustee), Dr David Lowis, James Mackay, Peter Mair, Dr Keith Marshall (Hon. Secretary), Noreen Marshall (Hon. Archivist), Dr Derek Miles (Hon. Treasurer), Julian Miller, Alastair Morrison, Paul Nutley, Barry Pike, Prue Raper, Jean Rollason, Caroline Shaw, Victor Spouge, Sharon Turner, Sir Robin Williams, Lady Wendy Williams

Apologies: Dr Nicholas Birns (Trustee), Martin Caine, Jill Chalmers, Annabel Davis-Goff, Paul Denman, Ann Dix, John Doyle, Dr Joanne Edmonds, Prof. Tony Edmonds, Peter Haley Dunne, Leatrice Fountain, Edward Hathaway, Dr Michael Helm, Dr Catherine Hoffmann, Phillip Holm, Kaarina Huhtala, Philip Ivory, Charles Jenkins, Hans Johansson, Neville Keery, Dr George Lilley, Jan Mair, Pat Miles, Nick Murray, John Naylor, Rev. Frank Peterson, Michael Phelps, Prof. John Potter, Jeanne Reed, Tony Robinson (Trustee), Dr John Roe, John Rollason, Elizabeth Savidge, Malin Siddiqi, Prof. Michael Swash, Elwin Taylor (Trustee), Col Peter Taylor, Susan Thompson, James Tucker, Nick Weller

1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence

1. The Chairman, Christine Berberich, welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. The Hon. Secretary had received apologies for absence from the members listed above together with 32 proxy votes to be cast in favour of all the motions.

2. Minutes of 2007 AGM

1. Minutes of the 2007 AGM had been circulated in advance of the meeting.
2. Asked about the possibility of a conference in Venice, the Hon Secretary reported that there were currently no plans for this and there are unlikely to be without help from someone who knows Venice well enough to be our agent there.
3. There being no further matters arising the minutes were approved unanimously and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Receive the 2008 Annual Report

1. *Annual Report 2008* had been circulated to members in advance and was presented by the Hon. Secretary, who summarised the key points:
   - Sad loss of Vice-President Hugh Massingberd
   - Membership stable at around 250 with 38% take-up of "5 years for 4" offer
   - Reorganisation of membership structure
   - Strength of *Secret Harmonies*, *Newsletter*, the website and the APLIST

- Centenary Conference proceedings
- Events: Bath conference, inaugural Anthony Powell Lecture & visit to Widmerpool

2. The Hon. Secretary paid heartfelt tribute to Hugh Massingberd who had been a tremendous asset to the Society and had been a major contributor to the Wallace Collection's Powell Centenary Exhibition.
3. Looking forward at the end of the reporting year (31 March 2008) there were a number of events on the horizon:
   - Publications in the pipeline: Bath Conference Proceedings,*Dance for Readers* talks and *Music Guide*
   - Second Anthony Powell Lecture
   - 5th Biennial Conference, 2009, Washington, DC
4. There continues to be a need for members to help run the Society. The Hon. Secretary announced that if no-one takes on the roles of Membership Secretary and Merchandising he will be standing down at the next AGM. An Events Organiser is also needed. Anyone able to assist should contact the Hon. Secretary.
5. The Annual Report 2008 was accepted unanimously.

4. Accounts Year Ending 31 March 2008

1. The Hon. Treasurer summarised the Society's accounts which were contained in the *Annual Report 2008*:
   - Excess income of £546 largely thanks to donations received, mostly as part of the sales of CDs
   - Cost of postage, printing & stationery continues to escalate
   - Small loss (about £50) on Bath conference
   - Reserves, which generate useful additional income are required to cover:
     - underwriting risks of events, *eg*. Washington Conference
     - forward liabilities, *eg*. subscriptions paid in advance
     - advance funding of publications and merchandise
   - Subscriptions need to rise by 10% from January 2009
2. It was suggested from the floor that the Trustees look at acquiring a US dollar account to help with finances for the 2009 conference; alternatively perhaps everyone should pay in dollars. The Hon. Secretary responded that dollar payments would be expensive to process in the UK and that we have a contractual obligation to process credit card payments in Sterling. However the Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer agreed to look at the available options. **Action: Secretary/Treasurer**
3. A question was raised about the effect of the subscriptions increase on those with existing "5 years for cost of 4" memberships. These members would not be surcharged, hence would be affected by the new rates only when renewing their membership.
4. In view of printing costs the question was again raised about making the *Newsletter* downloadable from the website or distributable by email. The Hon. Secretary pointed out that while this is a good idea and is regularly reviewed there are problems with it:
   - Roughly 50% of members do not (appear to) have internet or email access

- Making both electronic and printed versions available would reduce the print run and because of price breaks probably therefore increase costs
- A printed *Newsletter* arriving by mail is valued and gives members perceived value for money; something with which those present agreed.
- Making the *Newsletter* downloadable from the website would mean making (an area of) the website restricted to members only otherwise we would be giving away any reason for having membership. This would also impose a significant administrative overhead when we already do not have sufficient manpower.

5. There being no further questions the accounts were unanimously approved.

5. Appointment of Patric Dickinson as a Vice-President of the Society

1. The Trustees have invited Patric to become an Hon. Vice-President of the Society
   - Patric attended the inaugural conference at Eton in 2001
   - As our longest serving Chairman, under his leadership the Society has gone from strength to strength: he steered us through a critical four year period, including Powell's centenary year; the launch of the journal *Secret Harmonies*; and the working party on the Society's future organisation
   - Patric also organised some memorably enjoyable events, from the outing to Widmerpool, Nottinghamshire, to the champagne party at the College of Arms for Powell's 100th birthday in December 2005
2. Patric graciously accepted the Trustees' invitation.
3. Under the Constitution the appointment of President and Vice-Presidents has to be ratified by a general meeting of members. Accordingly members were invited to ratify the appointment, which was unanimously and enthusiastically approved.

6. Election of Executive Officers

1. The following were nominated as Officers:
   Chairman: Dr Christine Berberich
   Hon. Secretary: Dr Keith C Marshall
   Hon. Treasurer: Dr Derek Miles
2. There being no other nominations these candidates were elected unopposed.

7. Election of Executive Committee Members

1. The following were nominated as Executive Committee Members: Dr Nicholas Birns, Stephen Holden, Jeffrey Manley, Antony Robinson and Elwin Taylor.
2. There being no other nominations these candidates were elected unopposed.

8. Questions from the Floor & AOB

1. The Hon. Secretary reminded everyone of the AP Birthday Lunch on Saturday 6 December.
2. The 2009 AGM will be on the afternoon of Saturday 24 October, venue to be decided.

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The formal AGM business was followed by a talk **The Man Who was X Trapnel** by Paul Willetts; the text will be published in a future issue of *Secret Harmonies*.