

ROYAL SOCIETY PENSIONERS' ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting 2000 Minutes

of the fourteenth Annual General Meeting of the RSPA held at The Royal Society at 2.00pm on Monday 15 May 2000.

Members present:

David Griffin (*Chairman*)

Chris Argent (*Editor, BTT*)

Christine Brock

Ratti Balsara

Frances Chetham

Alan Clark

Vera Cockle

Gladys Dance

Brenda de Vere-Lewis

Iris Drake

Sheila Edwards (*Hon. Sec.*)

Gerry Evans

Don Harlow

Marjorie Harris

Joan Hurrell

Christine Johnson

Jeannie Lamb (*Events Sec.*)

Erica Lazarus (*Hon. Treas.*)

Jennifer Malcolm

Maurice Oak (*Committee member*)

June Rivett

Norman Robinson

Jenny Shanahan

Nadia Slow

Nancy Tupholme

Peter Warren

Eileen Wilson

Jackie Witchalls

Cheryl Davies [RS Staff Association Chairman] attended part of the meeting by invitation.

Unable to attend: 47 members

The Chairman welcomed Christine Brock who was attending her first RSPA AGM.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 1999 were confirmed.

2. Hon. Secretary's Report

Sheila reported that Thelma Atack, Christine Brock, Brenda Carruthers, Janet Clifford, Sandra Cumming, Pat Elliott, Mary Manning, Jane Silverleaf and Henry Varley had joined the RSPA since the last meeting. Flowers had been sent to Jenny Hutchinson on the occasion of her 80th birthday on 8 January 2000. Janet Clifford, Erica Lazarus, Nadia Slow, Richard Theobald, Ursula Tokle and Nancy Tupholme had been sent flowers while they were in hospital or unwell. Barry Jones's membership had lapsed. She was pleased to report that, as far as she was aware, no members had died during the year.

She hoped that the 2000 List of Members, including the list of Groups, together with copies of minutes of the 2000 AGM would be sent out with the next issue of *BTT*, due to be circulated in August.

On behalf of the members David thanked Sheila.

3. Hon. Treasurer's Report

Erica reported that Nigel Parfitt, as Hon. Auditor, will sign the Accounts for 1999/2000 shortly. She explained that the Miscellaneous expenditure of £116.28p was the cost of the members' lunch at the RS.

Erica noted that there was a current surplus of £901.01p and suggested that this should again be spent on a lunch for members at the RS. This was agreed and there was some debate over when the lunch should take place. Suggested dates were: early November, mid December, Twelfth Night and Valentine's Day. After a vote was taken it was agreed that the lunch would be held in early November ('Thanksgiving') and that members would be invited to bring one friend, or a spouse, who would be charged a nominal amount to cover the cost of their lunch.

On behalf of the members, David thanked Erica and Nigel.

4. Pensions Trustee

As Richard was unable to attend the AGM because of ill health, David reported on his behalf. Richard is in correspondence with the RS Treasurer, Sir Eric Ash, about the status of the Pensions' Trustee and the frequency with which existing pensioners' pensions were discussed at the Trustees' meetings. No answer had yet been received to his latest letter, sent early in April. Eileen Wilson asked if Richard could ascertain whether the current Pensions Booklet applied to deferred pensioners. David said he would take this up with Richard.

As previously reported to members, Richard wished to resign as Pensions Trustee in September, at the end of his current term. Ursula Tokle has agreed to be nominated as his replacement but was presently suffering from a bout of ill health. In the event that Ursula might not be well enough to take up the Trusteeship in September, David asked the meeting if it was willing for the Committee to nominate an alternative Trustee. This was agreed.

On behalf of the members David thanked Richard.

5. Beyond the Terrace Editor's Report

Chris reported that Issues 17, 18 and 19 had been mailed to members since the last AGM. The news sent by members to Sheila on the 'blue form' would be included in the next issue. Only 16 members had sent in news of their activities and Chris asked more members to send in news and articles to *BTT* as this was one of the most effective ways of keeping members in touch with each other. He was particularly keen to receive reminiscences from members on their years at the RS. David said that he felt that it was unfair that Chris had had to provide so many of the articles in the last issue of *BTT* himself. Peter Warren suggested that contributors would find it helpful to have feedback on what members find most interesting in *BTT*.

On behalf of the members David thanked Chris for his work in editing *BTT*.

6. Events Secretary's Report

Jeannie thanked members for all the flowers, letters and card she had received after deciding to resign as Events Secretary.

She reported that there had been a free Millennium lunch for members at the RS in January 2000, and very successful visits to the Guards Museum and backstage at the Royal National Theatre.

On behalf of the members David thanked Jeannie.

7. Elections

David began by thanking all the members of the Committee who were retiring: Sheila, as Hon. Secretary, for carrying out the main work of running the RSPA and who had introduced the List of Members circulated each summer and the system of welfare 'Groups'; Erica, as Hon. Treasurer, for keeping and presenting the accounts in such an ordered fashion, with the support of Nigel, as Hon. Auditor; and, particularly, Jeannie, who had given unstinting service to the

RSPA, first as Hon. Secretary and later as Events Secretary. The meeting expressed its appreciation.

David left the room while members were asked whether they wished to re-elect him as Chairman for a further year. This was unanimously agreed.

All the other elections were also unanimously agreed: Brenda de Vere-Lewis as Hon. Secretary, Vera Cockle as Hon. Treasurer, Erica Lazarus and Christine Johnson as joint Event Secretaries (an *ex officio* post) and Christine Johnson as a Committee member.

8. News of Members

Sheila noted that she had reported above and that other news would appear in the next issue of *BTT*. She asked if members present had any news of members from whom the Committee had not heard for some time.

9. Future of the RSPA

Sheila said that as agreed at the last AGM she had asked for members' views on the 'blue form' sent to members in April. 34 members had expressed no view, either because they were not concerned about the issue or because they planned to attend the AGM, 21 members wished to retain the existing name and 11 wanted a new name, the majority liking FRSSA (Former Royal Society Staff Association). There was some discussion. Brenda de Vere-Lewis said that she was worried that if the Association came to be perceived as just a former staff association, the RS might feel that they had no responsibility towards it and withdraw the privileges the RSPA pensioners currently enjoy, such as free lunches, photocopying and use of committee rooms and invitations to the Christmas lunch and Anniversary reception. A vote was taken: 21 members voted to retain the existing name, 4 voted for a new name and the remainder abstained. It was therefore agreed that the association should remain as the Royal Society Pensioners' Association.

10. News from the RS

The RS Personnel Officer, Karen O'Connell, was unable to attend for this item. Sheila had spoken to her early that morning to ask if there was anything that she could report to the AGM on Karen's behalf, but Karen felt that there was nothing that could usefully be said.

Cheryl Davies, RSSA Chairman, gave a lively report on RSSA activities. These included softball in the park, 5-a-side football, aerobics, a wine tasting, a visit to the theatre and the annual Christmas fair and a Christmas quiz. RSSA activities had raised £500 for Mind and for Shelter. The May Ball would be held on 19 May, tickets were still available and RSPA members were warmly invited to come. The RSSA was represented on the Career Development Group (now dissolved), the Assessment and Appraisal Working Group and the Health and Safety Committee. Cheryl said that elections were currently taking place for the RSSA committee and that she would be standing down as Chairman. The RSSA currently had 80 members out of a total of 120 staff.

Members asked if they could be apprised of the dates of the annual Christmas Fair and the May Ball as many would like to attend. Cheryl said that she would ask her successor as Chairman to liaise with the Hon. Secretary.

David thanked Cheryl for her report and for coming to the meeting.

11. Date of next Meeting

It was agreed to hold the next AGM on Monday 14 May 2001 at The Royal Society at 2.00pm. CR1 & 2 had been booked and it was hoped to be able to hold the lunch beforehand as usual.

Sheila Edwards
19 May 2000