**HISTORICAL ASOCIATION – EALING BRANCH**

**Annual General Meeting on 10 December 2024 for the year ending 30 June 2024**

**Ealing Green Church at 7.30 pm**

1. **Apologies for absence:** Humaira Sanders; Rodney Reid
2. **Attending:** Simon Cockshutt; Anne Hehir (Schools Liaison); Nina Joseph; James Gildea; Peter Crane; Frances Hounsell; Peter Hounsell (Chair); Rob Jones-Owen (Treasurer); Tony Sullivan; Clive Herring; Tim Perkins; Hermione Martin; Jane Cocking; Pete McDermott; Paul Sawbridge; Philip Woods (Secretary); Judith Woods; Sallie Mercer (Membership Secretary); Pierre Thomas (Visits Coordinator)
3. **Minutes of the last AGM 12 December 2023** were presented and approved as accurate **–** Ann Hehir proposed, and Simon Cockshutt seconded.
4. **Matters Arising**: Under item 4, Treasurer’s Report, PH re-iterated the request for any ideas members might have as to how we might spend some of our surplus funds in line with our charity’s aims. He said that our surplus was only in the middle range of the amount other branches held, but it would still be good to consider ways in which some of the money could be used usefully whilst maintaining a sound balance in our accounts.
5. **Treasurer’s Report**: R. J-O reported a deficit on the year of £126.96 and that we now had some £3352 in the current account.
6. **Membership Secretary’s Report**: SM reported a small reduction in the number of local members (53, down from 59 the previous year) and of national HA members (76, down from 87 the previous year).
7. **Chairman’s Report**: PH gave the bigger picture of an overall decline in national HA members, which were now below 10,000, after a Covid period boost which had taken the numbers over that figure.

This was one challenge, to recruit more members, both nationally and locally, and to increase the diversity of the membership. Another was to cater for the needs of the various national members, ranging from schools -primary and secondary- though academic historians in universities to those with a general interest in history.

PH raised the issue of whether we should continue our second-hand book sales as it seemed more difficult to convey books to the annual conference, where, in any case, sales were proving more difficult. Our stall at Brentford Festival each year was successful, however, both financially and in publicising our branch and its meetings. There was a suggestion from the meeting that we could offer books online and bring some to meetings.

**Action**: FH to look into this suggestion

PH ended by thanking committee members for their contribution which were crucial to the success of the branch. He welcomed offers of help from anyone who would like to be involved with the work of the committee.

1. **Secretary and Publicity Officer’s Report**

PW said that although the two roles worked quite well when integrated, he would prefer that a separate publicity officer took over for the coming season.

He also favoured a return to the system of using a sub-group of the committee to plan the 2025-26 season of talks.

**Action:** PW to invite committee members to join the sub-group starting in February.

He thanked PH and Paul Sawbridge for their efforts in setting up the IT systems in the church under very constrained time restrictions. The use of Zoom recordings made available to those registering on Eventbrite was regarded as valuable for those who were unable to attend in the evening and as a recap opportunity for those who were present.

As for publicity, he outlined the methods used and noted that average attendances in the church had risen to 52 from 38 in the previous season.

1. **Schools Liaison Report**

AH outlined the efforts that had been made during the year to make more contact with local schools and these had some successes in attracting some schools to encourage pupils to attend our meetings.

However, she also explained the reasons that it was still difficult to engage more with local schools.

Finally, she mentioned the branch’s involvement with the HA’s Great Debate scheme for schools, which PH had also referred to in his report. It appeared that West London schools were not very involved at present compared to some other areas of the country.

1. **Visits Co-ordinator.** PT was prepared to continue in this role and suggestions for places to visit were very much welcomed.
2. **Election of Officers:** the following were newly elected\* or re-elected- Proposed by Frances Hounsell and seconded by Paul Sawbridge
* **Chair Peter Hounsell**
* **Treasurer Rob Jones-Owen**
* **Secretary Philip Woods**
* **Publicity Officer Tony Sullivan\***
* **Membership Officer Sallie Mercer**
* **Schools Liaison Ann Hehir**
* **Visits Co-ordinator Pierre Thomas**
* **Committee members: Jane Cocking, Simon Cockshutt, Peter Crane, Rodney Reid, Humaira Sanders**