



**THE SHAKESPEARE CLUB OF STRATFORD UPON AVON  
191<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 2015**

held at the Shakespeare Institute, Church St., Stratford upon Avon  
on Tuesday, 8th September 2015 at 7.15 pm,

**MINUTES**

1. Election of Chair for the AGM.

Dr Susan Brock was elected Chair (proposed by Deb Follett, seconded by Janet Anslow).

2. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Helen Hargest, Madeleine Davis, Judith Wright, Daphne Ingram, John and Margaret Cunnington, Jean Lawrance, James Stredder and Amanda Wood.

23 members were present.

3. Minutes of the last AGM on 9 September 2014 and EGM on 14 April 2015 were circulated.

4. Matters arising from the minutes.

1. The Chair reminded members that it had been agreed that refreshments would in future be available just before the meeting at 7.30 and after. She asked for volunteers to come forward to staff the bar.
2. Website: The Chair announced that, thanks to the effort of Sylvia Morris the Club's site, [www.shakespeareclubstratford.org.uk](http://www.shakespeareclubstratford.org.uk), was up and running. It had been redesigned to include regular updates to details of forthcoming meetings as well as other information about the Club.
3. 2016 events: would be taken as a separate item.

5. Treasurer's report

Deb Follet circulated the accounts for the year ending April 2015. She reported that the membership stood at 109 in 2014/5, though members were slow to renew their membership for the coming season. Visitor numbers had increased mainly as a result of Jeremy Irons Presidential evening. Income from the raffle and bar were more or less as last year. The sale of silver pins was designed to break even. Fixed costs were stable but £200 had been donated to the Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations and the Committee felt obliged to repeat that donation in 2016. The website costs were high but this had been unavoidable.

For these reasons, the balance in hand at the end of the 2014/5 season was down by £571. Some extra costs were expected in 2016 to cover special events so she

suggested an increase in membership fees to £18 to take effect in 2016/7. Visitor fees would remain at £3.00 and students would continue to be admitted without charge. Currently the raffle, visitors and bar provided a safety net. The proposal to raise the subscription fee to £18 was proposed by Keith Batchelor, seconded by Linda Butland, and passed unanimously.

David Geldard asked that the previous year's accounts be circulated together with the current accounts at future AGMs. The Chair thanked the Treasurer for her hard work to keep the Club's finances in order.

#### 6. Election of Honorary Treasurer.

The Chair proposed Deb Follett as Honorary Treasurer for 2015/6, seconded by Eileen Geldard, and passed unanimously.

#### 7. Appointment of Honorary Accountant.

The Chair reported that the appointment of H.L. Barnes would continue. They made no charge for auditing the Club's accounts. The Treasurer had sent a letter of thanks.

#### 8. Election of Committee.

The Chair reported that last year's Committee was as follows: Janet Anslow, Susan Brock, Jean Lawrance, Mary Reardon, Eileen Geldard, Deb Follett, Paul Prescott, Margaret Cunnington, John Cunnington, Sylvia Morris. All were willing to stand again.

No proposals for new Committee members had been received. The Chair encouraged members to put their names forward next year.

The Chair proposed that existing members be re-elected; seconded by David Geldard and passed unanimously.

#### 9. Report on programme for this season.

The Chair reported on the coming season on behalf of the Programme Secretary Mary Reardon. 8 September: David Roberts, Birmingham City University, on Shakespeare and Jewellery; 13 October: Julian Bowsher, Senior Archeologist, MOLA, on Shakespeare's London Theatreland; 10 November: Joan Foley on Teaching Shakespeare in Schools: "Why do we have to do him if he's dead?"; 8 December: Roger Pringle on Americans, Shakespeare and Stratford; 12 January: Dr Will Sharpe on Shakespeare, Collaboration, and Dramatic Authorship: The Case of *Sir Thomas More*; 9 February, Dr. David Fallow on John Shakespeare Shakespeare & Sons – The life and business dealings of John Shakespeare and his sons; 8 March, Peter Kyle's Presidential evening; 12 April, the Chair of Stratford Shakespeare Celebrations. The list of speakers had been sent out to members.

The Chair thanked Ms Reardon for her efforts to put together an admirable programme.

#### 10. Celebrating Shakespeare 2016

The Chair reported:

- There had been a suggestion of a special members' outing to a Shakespeare-linked destination. Compton Winyates had been approached

but was currently not open to the public. Other options were being considered by the Committee.

- The proposal that the Club should fund a new quill for the Shakespeare statue at Bridgefoot was not being taken forward because of logistical problems with security, etc.
- The proposed panel on Shakespeare Clubs for the World Shakespeare Congress had not proceeded because of the prohibitive costs of registration and accommodation for participants.
- The suggestion that Shakespeare Club members might offer accommodation for overseas delegates was not proceeding owing to insurance implications.
- Susan Brock and Sylvia Morris were writing the history of the Club and seeking financial support from various funding bodies for images and design. The Club's Committee had recognised this as the 'official history' and offered some funding if required. Publication in 2016 was planned. The aim was to keep price to the £10 mark.
- There would be a lunch at the Falcon Hotel on 7 May to mark the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shakespeare's death. Guests were welcome but spaces were limited. The menus and order forms would be available at October's meeting and would be emailed to members. Payment (£27.50 per person for three courses) and menu choices should be returned to Eileen Geldard by the January meeting. Tickets would be transferable but not refundable.
- The Club would host a Tea on Monday 1 August at Holy Trinity Church for selected World Shakespeare Congress delegates. This would be an opportunity to inform delegates of the long and important history of the Shakespeare Club. All Club members were invited to attend. A call for cakes and help with teas would be made at April meeting.

#### 11. 2015/6 Raffle:

The Chair reported that a raffle would be held in January as usual, administered by John and Margaret Cunningham. Shakespeare books and bottles would be collected at November and December meetings.

#### 12. Any other business.

- a. The Chair announced that the ramp from Church St. up to the side door of the Hall at Mason Croft would be reinstated to improve access to the building. Large motorised wheelchairs might still find it more convenient to enter from the car park and through the French windows.
- b. The Chair announced that a conference on Shakespeare's History Plays: From Page to Stage was planned at Christ Church, Oxford 31 March to 3 April 2016. She would put a poster in the Conservatory and a notice would be circulated to members by email.
- c. Sylvia Morris called for members to support the Shakespeare Celebrations Development by becoming Friends at a minimum donation of £7 per year. The support of local people was particularly valued.

**After the business meeting there was a short break before the regular meeting at 7.45pm when Professor David Roberts, Executive Dean of Arts, Design and Media at Birmingham City University, spoke on 'Shakespeare and Jewellery'.**