

The Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London
Livery Committee

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held by
Zoom at 17.00 on Thursday 3 December 2020

Present:

Jane Carey-Harris (Chairman), Alan Collett (Honorary Treasurer), Deborah Malins (Honorary Secretary), The Master, The Clerk and 18 members of the Court of Assistants and of the Livery.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Elizabeth Bevan, Emma Dalton, Mark Fox, Susan Horsewood-Lee, Omar Khan, Eithne MacMahon, Joy Main, Luise Parsons, Martin Rossor and Catherine Sarraf.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 9 December 2019

The Minutes, having been previously circulated, were agreed and will be signed by the Chairman at the next available opportunity.

3. Matters arising

Stained glass windows update:

Dr Mike Spencer reported that the back lighting is progressing, subject to a small technical hitch being resolved. The window frames have been taken down and prepared. Thirteen of the 24 panes have been completed and progress is being made in collecting them. A specialist installer may be used with the hope of completing the work in Spring 2021.

The Chairman suggested holding a drinks reception for the donors when the panes have been installed and Covid-19 constraints permit. Dr Spencer felt the artists should also be invited.

The Master felt there should be a larger recorded event including a talk by an expert on the plants portrayed. Dr Roy Palmer suggested that it should be a charity event and hoped the Chairman of the Charity Committee would be able to take this forward.

4. Nominations and Voting for membership of the Livery Committee

The Chairman reported that three members and a Yeoman member were moving off the Committee. Only one new Liveryman was joining, Prof Mark Fox, so no ballot was required. If suitable candidates present themselves during the year they may be co-opted to fill the two vacant places.

Dr Alan Collett was re-elected as Honorary Treasurer for a further term in office. The Chairman thanked him for his efforts throughout his tenure in office.

5. Chairman's Report

Col Jane Carey-Harris reported as follows:

“Master, Wardens, Assistants, Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you all for attending and you are all, of course, most welcome. If anyone had told us back in December 2019 that life for all would have changed so dramatically then we would not have believed it. I had hoped that my second year in the Chair would provide us with interesting and fun social events not life by Zoom.

The Livery Committee had worked hard to arrange a really interesting programme of events for 2020 and beyond however the first few months entailed the organisers spending time postponing or cancelling some interesting trips. It is to their credit that they all did this without complaining. Some committee members such as Emma Dalton and Eithne MacMahon continued to be busy in the NHS, others were shielding and some, myself included, busy caring for elderly relatives. I am very grateful to my committee colleagues who have adapted so well and are arranging alternative events for us.

As you are aware, this meeting is traditionally followed by our Carol Service and supper. We cannot let this festive season pass without the usual Apothecary hospitality, and I am delighted that many of you will be joining us at our Christmas Wine Tasting the evening. Thank you, John Schofield, for organising this. If the first one you organised is anything to go by, we are set for an interesting and enjoyable evening.

To then get you in the festive mood we are holding a Christmas Event on Monday which will include music from the King's Singers and a talk about the history of Christmas Carols given by Mike Gibson, a former committee member. Please do sign up by contacting Liz Bevan. You could even do this via the Chat facility this evening.

During the year the Livery Committee actually managed to put on five face to face events. A detailed account of each event will be found in Apothecary when it comes out next month however I hope this report will give you a flavour of what was achieved in this challenging year.

The New Year started on a positive note. We were privileged that John Schofield facilitated a very interesting trip to the Reform Club in Pall Mall in February. Apothecaries were met by the Honorary Archivist, Dr Peter Urbach, who took them "Around the Club in 80 Minutes". Peter conducted the group from the Grand Saloon to the Exhibition Room celebrating 150 years of the Political Society, via the Card room where a live drawing class was in progress. They moved to the Smoking Room (where no smoking is allowed), and were met by Mr Simon Blundell, the Club's full-time librarian. Simon explained the origins of the 80,000 strong collection. They were given the rare treat of an opportunity to handle a Shakespeare "First Folio", one of a small number still in private (white gloved) hands.

Next the group visited the Library, one of the most elegant rooms in London, and met Mr Anthony Capo Bianco who explained the painstaking and rather expensive conservation of the room which he had supervised just a few years before. Finally, into the Morning Room with the newly opened Hansard Bar, followed by the Coffee Room, the main dining room of the Club where coffee is not normally taken.

Exhausted but satisfied, the group stopped for a "social function", and enjoyed a most convivial lunch around the central Club table in the Strangers' room. Food, wine and conversation flowed freely.

Following the success of the previous visit in 2018 Omar Khan kindly arranged another visit to The Magic Circle in March 2020. Twenty seven participants arrived at the quaint, old fashioned and delightful building in Euston. The visit included a guided tour of the fascinating museum containing memorabilia from way back to the present day, a demonstration of amazing close magic tricks and an excellent show in the theatre. The group were amused and dumbfounded and it really did put the magic back into magic. Apothecaries then retired round the corner for lunch in the airy "bridge" room at the top of the glass covered atrium of the RCGP.

And then came 24 March and our lives changed. Committee members were then busy postponing and cancelling long planned events as we considered what would be feasible in the future. Our overseas trips were cancelled with Chris Khoo and Eithne McMahon commencing negotiations with Millennium Tours as to the best way forward. Many participants have kept their deposits on hold and hope to go away next year on the rescheduled dates.

The Master and Court Assistants encouraged the Committee to seek opportunities for Society members to meet in Covid secure environments once the national lockdown was eased. And thus it was a dry July Sunday proved to be a special day for the Livery Committee: our first

outing since the Covid-19 lockdown. An article in a Kentish newspaper about Castle Farm near the pretty village of Shoreham in North Kent, was a prompt to arrange a visit to their lavender fields, the largest lavender farm in England. Caroline and William Alexander, the owners of the farm, were very helpful and offered us the opportunity to picnic in one of the fields with sole use of a marquee. Despite the short notice the trip was fully booked and Apothecaries enjoyed an interesting talk, picnic and time to walk around the fields. Many attendees enjoyed the opportunity to meet up with friends that they had not seen for weeks; indeed, three people mentioned that it was the first time that they had been out since March 2020. With the Livery Committee sponsoring a stained-glass panel of a lavender field in The Parlour, this trip was a perfect start to our new event calendar.

Kent was also the location for our second post-lockdown outing. On a very windy August Saturday 19 Apothecaries and their guests met at Chapel Down Vineyard. After coffee in the restaurant the group made their way outside to meet Tom, our enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide, for a tour of the vineyards and winery. They learnt about how the Bacchus, Chardonnay and other vines are grown on the more than 25 acres of land, handpicked by largely locally-based seasonal workers, then pressed, fermented and bottled to produce award-winning wines. A socially-distanced wine-tasting in the herb garden followed where Tom told the group more about the individual wines and they got to taste whether the wines lived up to their descriptions. As the rain started to fall Apothecaries retreated to The Swan, Chapel Down's on-site restaurant, for a delicious and leisurely lunch overlooking the vines.

In September, Dilip Joshi arranged a fascinating trip to St. Mary's Catholic Church in Clapham, South London, the attached monastery and Ace-of-Clubs (a charity for the socially deprived and homeless), followed by lunch in the monastery dining hall.

With the continuing changes in Covid restrictions we are now trying to put on a number of virtual Zoom events. We will be starting the New Year on a Scottish theme with a Scottish themed talk and a whisky tasting instead of our planned Burns Night Dinner. Put on the tartan, buy your haggis and do join us at what should be a fun evening.

Sadly we have said a final farewell to a long standing committee member and previous Chairman of the Livery Committee, Dr Frank Wells. Frank's health had gradually deteriorated and we were saddened to hear of his death in July. Frank had become a good colleague to many at the Society and a personal friend to others, and is sadly missed. I was honoured to represent The Society at his funeral and meet his close family and friends again.

Due to the pandemic and the disruption to our planned events, we agreed that all Committee members would be offered the opportunity to extend for one year. Many welcomed the opportunity however four decided that continuing on the committee is not feasible. I will not have the opportunity to thank them face to face. However, I would like to acknowledge the work put in by Wanda Jay, John Jolley, Luise Parsons and Robin Youngs.

A warm welcome is made to Mark Fox and Peter Mace who have joined the committee. Peter has already started helping us as he agreed to be the organiser of the Burns Night event. Thank you, Peter.

A special thanks must be given to Debbie Malins who has been so adaptable, helping us with setting up the Zoom meetings and ensuring that the committee continues to function well. We are all looking forward to getting back to The Hall and enjoying the hospitality after our meetings.

I look forward to seeing in the near future. Meanwhile please stay safe and look after yourselves both physically and mentally."

There were no questions to the report.

6. Honorary Treasurer's Report

The Honorary Treasurer presented the Table of Receipts and Payments and the Balance Sheet, see Appendix 1, and the Financial Report for individual events, see Appendix 2, as at the end of the financial year, 31 October 2020. He explained that, due to Covid-19, the independent examiner has yet to be able to visit to audit the accounts but that this would be done shortly. In the Financial Report he drew attention to the correction of an allocation error concerning the Holland Park event which, in fact, made a £97 surplus, and to the surplus of £1996.86 from the visit to Venice which was being put to charitable purposes. The 'Miscellaneous' surplus of £630 comprises a £500 donation from Tony Giambruno of Millennium Tours and £130 from the Magic Circle visit.

There were no questions to the report so Dr John Moore-Gillon proposed the adoption of the Accounts, seconded by Dr Julia Walport and agreed by all present.

7. Results of ballot for new members

No ballot was required.

8. A word from The Master

The Master expressed his sincere thanks to the Chairman and her Committee. He observed that Covid-19 has significantly restricted what was possible but held that the Chairman's report exemplified what could be done. He had had the pleasure of joining the virtual wine-tasting in November and had been very impressed by Francis Flavin's presentation.

9. Other business

There was no other business. The meeting ended at 17.40 hrs.

10. Date of next Annual General Meeting

Monday 6 December 2021.

..... December 2021

Chairman

Col Jane Carey-Harris

APPENDIX 1

Worshipful Society of Apothecaries

Livery Committee

Receipts and Payments Account for the year 1 November 2019 to 31 October 2020

Receipts			Payments		
Narrative	£	£	Narrative	£	£
Gold pins	48.55		Stained panes of glass	550.00	
Scarves	30.00		Engraved whiskey/water glasses	27.44	
Engraved whiskey/water glasses	178.50		Visit to Portsmouth (March 2019)	325.00	
Engraved Michelangelo design wine glasses	75.00		Visit to Venice (Jan 2019)	1,260.00	
Livery Committee ties	30.00		St Paul's Cathedral (6th November 2019)	1,049.63	
Miscellaneous	630.00		St Joseph's Hospice	50.00	
St Paul's Cathedral (6th November 2019)	1,050.00		Carol Service 2019	6,590.40	
St Joseph's Hospice	30.00		Burns Night	990.00	
Carol Service 2019	2,550.00		Reform Club	1,114.50	
Reform Club	1,400.00		Magic Circle (March 2020)	1,036.00	
Magic Circle	1,365.00		Cirencester (Roman Day)	140.00	
Cirencester (Roman Day)	140.00		Leith Hill Place	595.00	
Leith Hill Place	595.00		Vintners Hall	650.00	
Vintners Hall	650.00		National Memorial Arboretum	1,715.00	
National Memorial Arboretum	1,645.00		Chapel Down Winery (Aug 2020)	842.00	
Livery Committee Supper (4th Feb 2020)	1,365.00		Livery Committee Supper (4th Feb 2020)	1,784.70	
Livery Committee Supper (27th April 2020)	1,050.00		Livery Committee Supper (27th April 2020)	980.00	
Castle Farm Lavender	486.75		Castle Farm Lavender	449.25	
Chapel Down Winery	1,330.00		St Mary's & Ace Visit	216.23	
St Mary's & Ace Visit	300.00		Livery Committee Supper	350.00	
Livery Committee Supper	350.00		Secretarial Expenses	67.30	
		15,298.80			20,782.45
			Surplus of receipts over payments for year		-5,483.65
		15,298.80			15,298.80

Balance Sheet as at 31st October 2020			
General Fund		£	£
Balance as at 1st November 2019		24750	
Surplus of receipts over payments for the year ending 31st Oct 2020		-5484	
Current balance			19267
Represented by:			
Bank Current Account 26th September 2019			19266
Notes			
1	Set aside for Stained Glass expenses	6225	
2	Payments received in advance for events	210	
3	Payments made in advance for events	0	
A. Collett Hon. Treasurer			
Independent Examiner's Statement			
I confirm that I have examined the receipts and payments account for the year ending 31st October 2020 and have agreed the current bank account balance as at 31st October 2020			
Mr John Myers Dated			

Events organized by the Livery Committee during 2020

13 February	The Reform Club	J. Schofield
2 March	The Magic Circle	O. Khan
26 July	Castle Farm lavender fields	J. Carey-Harris
22 August	Chapel Down Vineyard, Kent	O. Khan
2 September	St. Mary's Church, Monastery and Ace of Clubs	D. Joshi
3 November	Wine Tasting by Zoom	J. Schofield
3 December	Festive Wine Tasting by Zoom	J. Schofield
7 December	Christmas event	E. Bevan

Livery Committee Events for 2021 which have probable dates

25 January	Burns Night event	P. Mace
25 February	Vintners' Hall	J. Schofield
mid May	Leith Hill Place	D. Malins
10 – 15 May	Visit to Friuli Venezia Giulia	C. Khoo
14 – 17 June	Visit to Chester	C. Sarraf
26 September – 3 October	Visit to Armenia	C. Khoo
October	70th Wexford Festival Opera	E. MacMahon
6 December	Carol Service and Supper	