



Minutes of the 14th Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 25th March 2023 at St George's, Orleton.

Present: Thirty-Seven members attended – listed at the end.

Apologies: Received from twenty-five members – listed at the end.

1. Welcome

Hugh Wood welcomed everyone to the fourteenth annual general meeting of the Mortimer History Society and to the talks by Rachel Sycamore on the two medieval dug-out chests in St George's, and by Philip Hume on Orleton and the Mortimers that would follow the formal meeting. Hugh expressed the Society's thanks and appreciation to St George's for allowing us to meet in its splendid church and to the volunteers from the church who had made and served the refreshments.

2. Minutes of AGM 2022 and matters arising

The minutes of the AGM 2021 had been circulated with the notice of the meeting. It was agreed unanimously, subject to 'Cathy Cowell' should be 'Kathy Cowell' that the minutes be accepted as written (proposed by Mike Beazley and seconded by Liz Phillips).

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

3. Trustees' Report

The written trustees' report had been circulated with the papers for the meeting, and, on behalf of the Trustees, Hugh Wood presented the highlights from another successful year for the Society, which included:

- The groundwork to create a new online seminar group on Medieval Wales and the Marches for scholars and academics to share their research. Membership is already 180, with seminars planned throughout 2023.
- After an appeal to members, we were able to purchase at auction an account roll for the Honour of Wigmore dated 1387-8. The members of our Medieval Documents Research Group then transcribed and translated it and started analysing what they had found.
- In 2022 we were able to offer more sessions in schools as part of our annual programme of work with local primary schools. For the first time we were invited to speak to a group of local sixth-formers studying medieval history. We were able to help them understand something of the history and significance of the Welsh Marches.
- For several years there has been no public access to the shell keep at the top of Wigmore castle. During 2022, we renewed our efforts to solve this problem,

developing strong relationships with English Heritage. They are now committed to the reinstatement of suitable steps and have earmarked funds for the work.

- October 2022 saw the publication of a new enhanced edition of *On the Trail of the Mortimers* by Society secretary, Philip Hume, that includes Mortimer-related sites across the whole of the Welsh Marches – *On the Trail of the Mortimers in the Welsh Marches*.
- The Society has commissioned Chris Jones-Jenkins, the talented and experienced architectural artist, to produce a new reconstruction drawing of Wigmore castle. The Castles Studies Trust have agreed to provide match funding for this project.
- We were successful in securing a significant grant from the Marc Fitch Fund towards the publication costs for an anthology entitled *The Mortimers of Wigmore 1066-1485: Dynasty of Destiny* to be launched at our conference at the Tower of London on 1st August 2023.
- As an experiment, we launched a photographic competition, inviting members and non-members to submit images illustrating the history of the Welsh Marches.
- In July 2022, we held a joint event at Usk castle in memory of John Grove, the founder of both the Mortimer History Society and the Friends of Usk Castle, who died in December 2021.

Hugh concluded by thanking all the trustees for their work and support during the previous year.

On behalf of the Trustees, Philip Hume announced a bold new initiative, due to be launched, to provide bursaries for post-graduate students researching the Mortimers and/or the Welsh Marcher Lordships. The plan is to finance one or more annual bursaries through donations from members. The scheme will be launched shortly.

The meeting accepted the Trustee's report (proposed by Yve James, seconded by Kathy Cowell)

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report and the annual accounts had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

Mike Beazley presented the accounts. He highlighted that the society completed the year with a small surplus of income over expenditure for the third year in a row, though noted that a Journal had not been published in the financial year so there had been no associated costs. Mike reported that the Society remained in an excellent position financially for the start of the 2023 events season, with substantial reserves.

The meeting agreed the annual accounts for 2022 and unanimously accepted the Treasurer's report (proposed by Mike Beasley and seconded by Kathy Cowell), and agreed the proposal to continue with Natasha Lawrence as Independent Examiner (proposed by Mike Beazley, seconded by Hugh Wood).

5. Membership Secretary's Report

The Membership Secretary's Report had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

Mike Beazley highlighted that at the end of 2022 membership stood at 436, though also noted that since the 1st of January membership had continued to increase to 455. Whilst 69% of members live in the West Midlands and Wales, 9% are from overseas and 22% live elsewhere in the UK.

The meeting agreed to accept the Membership report unanimously (proposed by Mike Beazley, seconded by Philip Hume).

6. Election of Trustees

Eleven people had put their names forward for election as Trustees. As the constitution allows for up to 12 Trustees, this meant that there was no need for an election and the following were elected for the period until the end of the next AGM in 2024:

Mike Beazley, Kathy Cowell, John Fleming, Annie Garthwaite, Elizabeth Holley, Philip Hume, Angela Iliff, Yve James, Clive Jupp, Kirsten Lawton-Smith and Hugh Wood.

7. Programme for 2023

The 2023 programme of conferences, lectures and study trips was circulated at the meeting. Philip Hume highlighted two events of especial significance: the John Grove Memorial Lecture which, in 2023, will be given by Dr David Stephenson in the splendid setting of Powis Castle, and, we look forward to our most ambitious event yet which will be a conference held at the Tower of London on 1st August to mark the 600th anniversary of Roger Mortimer's escape from the Tower on 1st August 1323.

8. Date of 2024 AGM

It was agreed that the date of the AGM in 2024 would be either Saturday 16th or 23rd March, hopefully in St James', Wigmore.

The formal meeting was followed by talks by Rachel Sycamore and Philip Hume which were also attended by residents of Orleton.

Philip Hume
Meeting Secretary

Members Present:

Kate Andrew, Jeff Aston, Mike Beazley, Daniella Bergman, Gwyneth Bowyer, Steve Briggs, Leigh Bullimore, Ruth Butler, Kathy Cowell, David Cowell, Judith Cuddihey, Lynne Eaves, Charles Edwards, Barbara Gittings, Trevor Griffiths, Philip Hume, Yve James, Simon Jameson, Clive Jupp, Kirsten Lawton-Smith, Philip Lee, Claire Lewis, Jeremy Lewis, Priscilla Llywelyn, Lorraine Mann, Mickie O'Neil, Valentina Peate, Liz Philips, Judith Roele, Arno Roele, Andrew Stirling-Brown, Pamela Thom-Row, Anne Turtle, Conor Williams, Doris Wood, Hugh Wood, Safi Zagni.(37 members).

One non-member in attendance – David Filsell

Apologies received from:

Esther & Andrew Colby, Paul Dryburgh, Howel Evans, John & Inge Fleming, Annie Garthwaite, Elizabeth Holley, Angela Iliff, Caroline Johnson, John Kenyon, Margaret Lloyd, Liz Molyneux, John Newman, Fran Norton, Jason & Elizabeth O'Keefe, Gail & John Peacock, Susan Powell-Jones, David Stephenson, Helen Watt, Gareth Williams, Angela & BenYates (25 members)