

THE MILESTONE SOCIETY  
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1105688

MINUTES

of the Eleventh Annual General Meeting – 6<sup>th</sup> October 2012  
at Century Theatre, Snibston Museum of Discovery, Ashby Road, COALVILLE, Leics LE67 3LN

**1. Chair's welcome**

Following an introduction to the Century Theatre by the Custodian, the Chair, David Viner, welcomed 48 members to the eleventh AGM/Annual Conference.

**2. Apologies** from 20 members had been notified to John Atkinson; others were notified by attendees. The Chair reflected on the loss to the Society of absent friends, particularly Terry Keegan and Lawrence Dopson to whom fulsome tributes had been paid in Milestones & Waymarkers 5. Members stood to observe a minute's silence.

**3. The Minutes of the AGM held 1 Oct 2011** in Bicester were accepted and signed as correct record.

**4. Hon Sec's report 2011 -12**

John Atkinson reported that he had received the usual number of requests and queries, including from Lady Coke one day and Alan Bennett – but not **the** Alan Bennett – the next. It was a pleasure to deal with enthusiastic people. If they were also a little eccentric, so much the better. Being Secretary of the Society allowed him to indulge himself. Never was this more the case than when he could pop round and have a chat with the man who recruited him – the much-missed Terry Keegan. Terry was a wonderful combination of enthusiasm, eccentricity and well-grounded, let's-get-things-done common sense. He leaves a hole in life. In an email apologising for absence, Mike Buxton had asked that his appreciation of the retiring Chairman should be recorded: *my thanks to David Viner for his excellent chairmanship of all the Committee and national meetings he has chaired which I have witnessed over the last eleven years. Alongside his wealth of knowledge David has always had an ability to quickly summarise issues being debated, drawing conclusions and getting through the often considerable number of items on the various agendas in good time.* That, too, had been John Atkinson's experience. The Hon. Secretary's report was accepted.

**5. Membership Secretary's Report 2011 -12**

Brian Barrow reported that the Society ended the subscription year 2011-12 on 31st May with another slight increase in membership over the last year. A total of 530 members and was made up of 325 individual members, 96 couples (i.e.192 members) and 13 corporate. However, up to the end of September there had been 48 members who had not renewed. On the other hand, so far this year the Society had received 32 new members. Reminders had been sent out with the AGM notice and a number of renewals received. Brian hoped to receive more.

A number of members had used the online facility linked to the Society website whereby members can renew, and new members can join, using their credit card and paying through the secure site of PayPal. Over 40 renewals or new members had been received via this facility in the last membership year and already this year over 60 people had used it either to renew or to join as new members. Brian prefers members to use PayPal, if possible, as it is much easier for him to administer.

Members were reminded that the Society does not produce membership cards any more and that renewal is acknowledged by showing the year membership expires on envelopes sent from the Society. Visiting cards are available to authenticate activity.

On behalf of the Society, Brian thanked those who agreed to Gift Aid their subscriptions and also those who included a donation to funds, some postage stamps or a stamped addressed envelope with their renewal forms.

In response to questions, Brian said that the Society makes efforts to investigate and chase-up non-renewals, where possible via County Reps.

The Membership Secretary's report was accepted.

## **6. Hon Treasurer's Report 2011-12**

The Treasurer's Report had been circulated with the Agenda

Jan Scrine expanded on her Report. The Society is living beyond its means, primarily as a result of increased postal costs. Meetings are run very economically. The Society must seek more members. Some Gift Aid could still be claimed, but less than in the past. Approaching £1000 had been donated in Terry Keegan's name.

Jan responded to questions. John Higgins wondered why proposed subscription increases had not been set at £12.50 and £15. Jan said that a further increase on the figures proposed in the agenda may be required next year. Michael Knight enquired about postcard sales. Sales are patchy and slow. Rodney Hills asked whether it was possible to subscribe for future membership in advance. Advanced subscription for up to ten years is possible. Jan commented further that the Society has 420 subscribers at £10 and an additional 100 joint members at £2. Subscriptions are insufficient and the Society is unable to save by using email as many members have no internet connection. Paul Gibbons sought clarification of Gift Aid arrangements. Jan described procedures.

John Higgins proposed that from 01 June 2013 Single membership should be raised to £12.50 and Joint membership to £15 (Corporate £20 and Overseas £25 as proposed in Agenda). Nigel Ford seconded. Carried with clear majority.

Ian Thompson (Cornwall) asked whether increases in subscription fees shouldn't be greater. Jan felt that the effect on membership of a modest increase should be tested first. John Higgins commented that enthusiasts could add donations to their subscriptions. The Treasurer's Report was accepted.

## **7. Chair's Report 2011 -12**

The Chair's Report had been circulated with the Agenda. David Viner reinforced and expanded upon points made in his report. The Society had well-structured purposes, but faced challenges, particularly a financial challenge which emphasised the need to maintain a membership of 500 plus. Our databases continue to expand. The Layering in most recent developments allows others with different interests to link into the Society. Managing the body of archive material held by the Society, including a quantity contributed by Terry Keegan, presents another challenge. Group activity in the regions is important, especially in bringing corporate pressure to bear within the counties. Having a new patron, Sir Neil Cossons, offers the Society opportunities to exercise a wider role in heritage management. Finally, David thanked the Society for the wonderful opportunity of being Chair.

## **8. Election of Officers**

The Chair drew attention to the intention to adhere to the three year cycle of office (item 7(ii) of the Constitution quoted in item 8.5 of the Agenda).

There being no other nominations, Officers and Committee Members as listed in item 8.6 were elected unanimously.

## **9. Publications**

Mike Hallett (Newsletter) and John Nicholls and David Viner (Milestones & Waymarkers/On the Ground) were thanked for the high quality of the Society's publications.

## **10. Appointment of Hon Auditor**

Dr John Armstrong was thanked once more for auditing the accounts and re-elected unanimously.

## **11. AOB**

Michael Le-Baigue (Derbyshire) offered to act as a consultant to the Society on education and related areas.

Future meetings:

Spring Conference 2013 – Sat. 11 May – Teignmouth & AGM 2013 – Sat. 5 October - Stafford  
Likely venues for Spring Conference 2014 – Northants & AGM 2014 – Worcestershire

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