

**The Martineau Society
(Registered Charity No. 1064092)**

**Minutes of the 25th Annual General Meeting:
Held via Zoom, 3rd November, 2020, 4-5pm.**

Present: Sue Brown, Bruce Chilton, Carol Chilton, Sharon Connor, Valerie Doulton, Dee Fowles, David Hamilton, Stuart Hobday, Josephine McQuail, Valerie Sanders, Beth Torgerson, John Vint, Gaby Weiner, Iris Voegli, Rod Voegli, Catherine Heyrendt, Sandi Davis, Iain Crawford, Josephine McQuail.

- 2. Apologies:** Geraldine Locise, Lisa Scholl, Jeremy Martineau.
- 3. Minutes of the 24th AGM (Chancellor's Hotel, Manchester).** Accepted with very minor alterations and submitted to John Vint (chairperson) for safe keeping.
- 4. Chairperson's Remarks:** John Vint welcomed everyone to the online meeting and confirmed that the action arising from the 2019 AGM had been completed.
- 5. Secretary's annual report.** Sharon Connor shared a report of the Society's work in 2019-20.
 - (a) **Membership:** Enquiries and membership applications to the Society are received by the Treasurer, who then sends regular updates to the Secretary and newsletter editors. We currently have a total of 72 members.
 - (b) **Committee and Conference Planning:** The Committee successfully operated during the year, predominantly by email. Thanks are due to Valerie Sanders and Gaby Weiner for putting arrangements in place for the 2020 annual conference in Scarborough – which had to be cancelled. The current plan is to move to the same venue in 2021.
 - (c) **Links with other Societies:** The Martineau Society is a member of the Alliance of Literary Societies and the Friends of Key Hill Cemetery. Further electronic links include English Heritage, Unitarian Historical Society, Friends of Highgate Cemetery, The Huguenot Society, The Gaskell Society, The Bronte Society, The Carlyle Society, The Wordsworth Trust and B.A.V.S. We now also have a good working relationship with RSVP (Research Society for Victorian Periodicals) The Huguenots of Spitalfields Society, The Blake Society and The Browning Society.
 - (d) **Publications:** Recent publications by members include Iain Crawford's *Contested Liberalisms; Martineau, Dickens and the Victorian Press* and Bob Gamble's *Mrs Gaskell's Personal Pantheon*. Thanks to Gaby and Valerie, for their continued work in serially, chapter by chapter, placing Elisabeth Sanders Arbuckle's Harriet Martineau biography on to the Society's website. This transcription work is approaching the half-way stage.
 - (e) **Newsletter:** Thanks to the editor, Bruce Chilton, and administrator, Valerie Sanders, for maintaining the publication's high standards in the latest issue (No. 45).
 - (f) **Public Benefit:** One of the conditions of Charity Commission registration is that societies indicate the public benefit of their work. The Martineau Society continues to serve students, scholars and members of the public as an important information source, particularly through its website, annual meeting and

newsletters. That is, it provides a service to anyone interested in the history, culture, social movements and campaigns of the nineteenth century.

- 6. Treasurer's Report:** Dee Fowles presented an oral report based on the Society's audited accounts for 2019. The Society's two financial accounts have been merged - for ease of operation in an era of low interest rates. Major sources of income during 2019 include a bequest from Sophia Hankinson (£1000), a new life member from USA (c£250), and the Gift Aid refund (£300). Expenditure included £500 to the Norwich Literary Festival (for the Harriet Martineau Lecture) and £500 as a Hotel deposit for the 2020 Conference (which will be carried forward to the 2021 conference). The current bank balance is £8400.
- 7. Newsletter Editor's report:** Bruce Chilton reported on the latest issue (October, 2020, No. 45) and suggested that even if conference papers are not published in the Newsletter, their details (author, title, address) should also be included in future issues of the Newsletter.
- 8. Newsletter Administrator:** Valerie Sanders reported that production and distribution costs of the Martineau Society Newsletter had increased to over £200, with postage to overseas members being the main additional cost.
- 9. Society's Administrator:** Gaby Weiner reported that much of her work has comprised managing the Society's website and submitting an annual report to the Charities Commission. Through regular updating, the Society's website remains a living, responsive and functioning source. While preparing the Charities Commission report, Gaby realised that the Society has more trustees than required. In response, long-standing trustees, Iris and Rod Voegli, indicated that they would be pleased to stand down. They were warmly thanked for their work on behalf of the Society.
- 10. Election of officers and committee:** the following agreed to continue in post and, accordingly, were unanimously elected.
 - President: Valerie Sanders
 - Chairperson: John Vint
 - Treasurer/Membership Secretary: Dee Fowles
 - Secretary - Sharon Connor
 - Administrator- Gaby Weiner
 - Newsletter Editor: Bruce Chilton
 - Newsletter Administrator: Valerie Sanders
 - Minute Secretary: David Hamilton
 - Other Committee members: Beth Torgerson (North America) and Stuart Hobday.
- 11. 2021 Annual Conference:** to be held at the Crown Spa Hotel, Scarborough, Sunday 18th-Wednesday 21st July. Further details will be posted on the Society's website. Future conference venues were not discussed.
- 12. Any Other Business:**
 - (a) *Harriet Martineau Biography:* This comprises 55 chapters of which half have already been posted on the Martineau Society website having been scrutinised by Valerie Sanders and Gaby Weiner. The incredibly-detailed biography is already being extensively consulted.

- (b) *Annual Martineau Lecture*: Sponsored by the Society, Ellah Wakatana has been invited to be the 2021 lecturer. Her lecture will form part of the Norwich Literary Festival, to be held in April.
- (c) *Martineau-related publications*: Valerie Doulton indicated that her *Harriet Martineau and Charlotte Bronte - a sketch of their relationship* is now available on Amazon and that one of her podcast series on deafness, featuring Harriet Martineau will be available in the Middle of November.
- (d) A Martineau-related publication by Catherine Heyrendt will be posted on the Society's website (action Gaby Weiner, duly accomplished).
- (e) Josephine McQuail asked if she could pay her Martineau Society subscription through PayPal. Dee Fowles AGREED to investigate.
- (f) The meeting also noted that James Martineau's birthplace is currently for sale and that the Bed and Breakfast venue where Harriet stayed in Tynemouth has been returned to residential use.
- (g) Sarah Perry's *Harriet Martineau* lecture at the 2018 Norfolk and Norwich Festival has been published in book form: *Essex Girls: For profane and opinionated women everywhere* (London: Serpent's tail, 2020) .

The AGM closed just after 5pm.

Signature of Chair:

date:

ACTION CHECK LIST

Item	Responsibility	Task
12	Dee Fowles	PayPal for international subscriptions
12	Gaby Weiner	Catherine Heyrendt's article uploaded to website.
12	Valerie Sanders & Gaby Weiner	Continue to edit and upload Elisabeth Sanders Arbuckle's biography of Harriet Martineau.
9	Gaby Weiner	Amend list of trustees