

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

Minutes of the 26th Annual General Meeting:

Held at the Crown Spa Hotel, Scarborough, Tuesday 20th July, 2021

Present: Sue Brown, Bruce Chilton, Carol Chilton, Sharon Connor, Dee Fowles, Bob Gamble, David Hamilton, Stuart Hobday, Geraldine Locise, Josephine McQuail, Victorine Martineau, Valerie Sanders, Bob Stillwell, John Vint, Gaby Weiner.

2. Apologies: Iain Crawford, Jeremy Martineau, Suzie Grogan, Ann Peart, Victoria Harris, Beth Torgerson, Keiko Funaki and Valerie Doulton.

3. Minutes of the 25th AGM (held via Zoom, 3rd November, 2020). Accepted with minor alterations and submitted to John Vint (chairperson) for his signature and safe keeping.

4. Chairperson's Remarks: John Vint welcomed everyone and, in particular, thanked Valerie Sanders for steering the postponed 2020 conference forward to 2021.

5. Secretary's annual report. Sharon Connor shared the following 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 71 members.

(b) Committee and Conference Planning: The Committee successfully operated during the year by email and Zoom. Enormous thanks to Valerie Sanders for organising this year's conference in Scarborough, which proved to be a particularly difficult conference to pull together.

(c) Internet Web Site: Gaby Weiner continues to encourage members to keep her updated on all events, reviews or news relevant to The Martineau Society. Thanks are also due to Gaby and Valerie for their light-touch editorial work in preparing Elisabeth Sanders Arbuckle's biography of Harriet Martineau for inclusion on the Society's website. Twenty-eight of fifty-five chapters are now published on the website.

(d) Links with other Societies: The Martineau Society is a member of the Alliance of Literary Societies (their newsletter is distributed to members via email) 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 the British Association for Victorian Studies (BAVS), RSVP (Research Society for Victorian Periodicals) The Huguenots of Spitalfields Society, The Blake Society and The Browning Society.

(e) Meetings and Events: The Society was again delighted to support financially the the Annual Harriet Martineau Lecture held in Norwich and delivered by Ella Wakatama. There was also an online exhibition at Durham University titled *Journeys: Reading the World* which included HM's *Guide to the Lakes*. For Disability History Month in November 2020, the Cadbury Research Centre, University of Birmingham hosted two talks: *Harriet Martineau. Living with Deafness* by Jenny Childs, and *Twenty-first Century Reflections on Harriet*

Martineau's Letters to the Deaf by Helen Barrell. Both talks can be accessed via the Society's website.

(f) Newsletter: The latest (46th) edition of the Newsletter has recently been circulated. Our thanks go to the Editors, Bruce Chilton and Valerie Sanders, who have continued to assure its editorial standards. As always, the editors welcome new material to ensure the Newsletter's regular appearance.

(g) Public Benefit: Mindful of the wishes of the Charities' Commissioners, the Society continues to provide an important information source, particularly through its website, annual meeting and newsletters, for students, scholars and members of the public interested in the history, culture, and social movements and campaigns of the nineteenth century. Contact details for anyone interested in the Society can be found on the Martineau Society's website.

6. Treasurer's Report: Dee Fowles tabled the Society's account for 2019 and 2020. In her oral report, she noted that the Society applies for its Gift Aid refund every three years; that the £500 subvention of the Martineau Lecture at the Norfolk and Norwich Festival will continue for another year; and that Stuart Hobday should be encouraged to apply retrospectively for an annual bursary for the Martineau Society Conference (2021). The current available bank balance is £8230 and it was AGREED that a portion of such capital might be used to support projects such as indexing Elisabeth Arbuckle's biography of Harriet Martineau.

7. Newsletter editor's and administrator's report: Bruce Chilton and Valerie Sanders made their annual appeal for fresh material. Bruce added that he would welcome information about Martineau material published elsewhere which could be included in the 'news' section of the *Newsletter*. Josie McQuail suggested that successful student project/papers might also be a source of material. Bruce also reiterated the Society's policy of not putting *Newsletter* issues online until a year has elapsed after their original appearance. Valerie also AGREED that she was aware of the need to update the online index of the *Newsletter* and hoped to complete this task before the next AGM.

8. Society's Administrator: Gaby Weiner reported that much of her work had comprised administering the Society's website and submitting an annual report to the Charities Commission. Regarding the Charities Commission, it was suggested Dee Fowles to the current list of Martineau Society Trustees should another be needed (in addition to Gaby Weiner, Sharon Connor, Victorine Martineau, John Vint, Bruce Chilton, Beth Torgerson and Valerie Sanders). Bruce suggested, and the meeting agreed, that he would speak with Iris and Rod in order to confirm their intentions regarding the status, (of either or both) as Trustees. Gaby added two comments about the Society's website. First she noted the valuable contribution of Brian Homer (technical adviser) who keeps a watch over the technical aspects of the site which now - Gaby's second point - includes a log-in counter. Plans are afoot to publish these statistics on the Martineau Society's website and *Newsletter*. Between June 24th and July 23rd, 2021, for instance, 332 searchers from 10 countries consulted 719 pages of the website giving, on average, almost 2 minutes of their time to each inquiry.

9. Election of officers and committee: the following agreed to continue in post and, with the addition of Josie McQuail to the committee, were elected *nem con.* .

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, Josie McQuail and Stuart Hobday.

10. Annual Conference: It was AGREED that the 2022 annual conference be held in Broadstairs (Kent) and be organised by Stuart Hobday and Gaby Weiner. Suggested locations for subsequent conferences included Dieppe and Dublin. Stuart also raised the possibility of the Society organising one-day events (e.g. in London).

11. Any Other Business:

(a) *Social Media:* It was AGREED, following Stuart Hobday's suggestion, that the society's website should include links to social media and that, in effect, Stuart should serve as the society's 'publicity or communications officer'.

(b) Picture postcards of Scarborough were sent from the conference to a range of overseas and retired members: Iain Crawford, Jeremy Martineau, Keiko Funaki, Beth Torgerson, Shu-Fang Lai, Ruth and Rob Watts, James Martineau, Iris and Rod Voegli, Valerie Doulton, and Lyn Holt.

The AGM concluded just after 12.30 pm.

Signature of Chair:

date:

ACTION CHECK LIST

Item	Responsibility	Task
6	Members	Projects funded from society's assets.
7	Valerie Sanders	Updating online <i>Newsletter</i> index
8	Gaby Weiner	Include Dee Fowles as a trustee, and remove the Voegelis
10	Gaby Weiner & Stuart Hobday	Preparation for 2022 annual conference
11	Stuart Hobday & Gaby Weiner	Link website to social media.