

Essex Society for Family History

Minutes of the 33rd Annual General Meeting of the North West Essex Branch,
held at the Baptist Church Lower Hall, Audley Road, Saffron Walden
on Thursday 12th September 2019 with the following members in attendance:

Janice Sharpe, John Read, Lesley Furlong, Michael Furlong, Alan Stalley, Margaret Graves, Olive Newman, Carol & Martin Foreman.

The meeting commenced at 8 p.m.

1. Apologies. These were received from: Tessa Pilsbury, Sandra Harris & John Sly.
2. Minutes of the 32nd Annual General Meeting, having been circulated prior to the meeting, were approved by those present (proposed by Olive Newman & seconded by Carol Foreman) and were duly signed by the Chairman.
3. Matters arising. Members were reminded that most matters were covered by the reports posted on our Branch page of the website. The Secretary had printed the previous 12 months for anyone to read at the meeting. The secretary then went on to confirm that the Saffron Walden Cemetery project is complete up to February 2017. The Town Council now keep the records up to date and anyone wishing to search for a burial after that date is directed to the Town Council website. He confirmed that we had sent our thanks to Brian Gough (a former member) who had been maintaining the records for our Branch since 2002. John Read (Treasurer) then offered an apology as although it had been agreed at the last AGM to re-imburse Tessa Pilsbury £10.00 towards refreshment costs, he had omitted to do so-this will be rectified as soon as possible.
4. Chairman's Report. Janice Sharpe confirmed the privilege she sees in her role as Chairman. She reminded everyone how successful a year it has been with our programme of transcribing St. Mary's Baptisms, and the release of the 3rd CD in March 2019. She also mentioned the highly popular evening in June when members shared their stories & experiences at an open meeting. So successful was it that it had been agreed to repeat it after this AGM. She confirmed her continuing attendance at the Executive Committee meetings in Chelmsford wearing the two hats of Chairman & also Minute Secretary. A copy of her report is held with our minutes.
5. Treasurer's report. John Read presented the accounts to March 2019 and gave an explanation of the financial activity for the relevant 12-month period. He reminded attendees that as the Society's financial year ends in March the accounts are already 6 months out of date. He confirmed that payment for the hall is not a true reflection of the cost as sometimes we pay in arrears. Under stationery the cost of the laptop upgrade is included. John raised the issue of holding Petty Cash when there is little need so he has now paid it all into the building society account. He did confirm that he has asked for another £200.00 top up from Chelmsford which will appear in next year's figures. As John is standing down, Janice Sharpe proposed a vote of thanks to him for fulfilling the Treasurer's role for so many years, and this was approved by all present.

6. Election of Officers. Lesley Furlong took the chair for the purpose of electing Janice Sharpe to the position of Chairman.

- Chairman- **Janice Sharpe** (p. John Read -s. Martin Foreman)

Mrs Sharpe then took the chair for the following appointments.

- Secretary- **Mike Furlong** (p. Alan Stalley - s. Margaret Graves)
- Treasurer- **Alan Stalley** (p. Lesley Furlong- s. Margaret Graves)
- Committee Members: **Margaret Graves & Sandra Harris** (p. Martin Foreman- s Carol Foreman)

7. Future Programme:

- *Workshops:*

It was established that we would be tackling the Victorian Transcripts. The Secretary brought a few examples of what to expect, including the database printouts. The first such workshop will be held in March 2020.

- *Christmas meeting.* Mike Furlong confirmed having completed his Christmas quiz ready for December 2019.
- *Speakers:* It was agreed that we still do not have a need for speakers at this time.

8. Any Other Business-

- Mary Whiteman Memorial Talk-October. Mike Furlong will be giving this talk to the Historical Society and he encouraged everyone to attend as it is based upon our work of transcribing the St. Mary's baptism records. Anyone can attend as entry is free because it is a special presentation.
- Executive Committee changes. Janice Sharpe confirmed the resignation of Colin Smith from the role of webmaster after very many years in that post. As Paul Stirland (currently Chairman) will move up into that position from Deputy webmaster, Fred Feather is also standing as chairman at the Society AGM on 21st September.

The official part of the AGM closed at 8.30 pm. John Read reminded everyone present of the Heritage weekend coming up on 14/15th when the URC and St. Mary's churches with the Quakers will open their doors and archives for visitors to peruse.

After a short break the members enjoyed the experience of sharing their stories and anecdotes from their research files.