

NORTHUMBRIAN CAMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday, September 25, 2020

Email-conducted instead of in person
at the Royal Grammar School

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

What a year it has been, and one made especially memorable due to the coronavirus pandemic! Our programme for the year began when we met as an Association, as usual, at the Royal Grammar School on September 27, 2019 for our AGM and Annual Lecture. 18 members plus 7 guests attended the AGM, while 17 members plus 15 guests attended the buffet and lecture. The buffet was provided by Boldon Farmhouse Pantry and the wines by Michael Jobling. Professor Tony Badger, former lecturer in the History Department of Newcastle University (1971 to 1991), Paul Mellon Professor of American History at Cambridge and Master of Clare College until 2014, and currently Professor of American History at Northumbria University in Newcastle upon Tyne, gave an excellent lecture on 'The Kennedys and The Gores' and this was followed by lively questions, and a vote of thanks from Professor Ian Fells.

17 of our members and their guests attended our Autumn Concert at the Sage on Sunday, November 24, for an evening of folk music dedicated to the North East mining tradition and performed by the 'Pitmen Poets'. Thanks are extended to Heather Cordell for buying the tickets, and for making arrangements for our convivial pre-concert Brasserie dinner, which was enjoyed by 13 members and guests.

Our Festive Events, always popular, attracted more members than ever. 45 members and guests registered for our Christmas lunch on December 6 at the County Hotel, where we were accommodated in the attractive and spacious Mozart Suite for our customary 3-course lunch. The staff were attentive, and a convivial occasion was enlivened further when Heather Cordell gave out Christmas Carol songsheets and led us in communal carol singing, with the aid of her recorder. 27 members and guests also assembled in the Digital Lounge of the Tyneside Cinema on Saturday, December 14, for our annual festive afternoon tea and the showing of the classic post-war film, *The Holly and the Ivy* (1952). We also followed up our Freshers' Welcome Party at Mincoffs the previous September with a Freshers' Reunion at Revolution, Collingwood Street, on Wednesday, December 11, when members of the Committee along with Mincoffs' host, Tim Gray, were joined by 2 of the freshers for cocktails and mocktails.

Our Winter Outing on February 8, 2020, saw 28 of us gathered at the Discovery Museum, where, after refreshments, we were given guided tours of the building, including the archives, the majestic wood-panelled and tiled Great Hall and the costume store, followed by lunch in the Carpathia and adjacent Northumberland Rooms. All were enthusiastic about the visit.

Wednesday, March 11, 2020, was a very special evening for us, for it was then that we held our Annual Dinner at the Northern Counties Club to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the establishment of the Association. 30 members and guests attended. For the occasion, we had, among other things, a new banner, an anniversary cake, a display of early Minute books and a quiz relating to the Association's past events and excursions. After an excellent dinner, we were entertained by two of our Past Presidents, James Wright giving a history of the Association and Ian Fells his reminiscences of Cambridge in the 1950s. Special guest, Ian Roberts conveyed the congratulations of the Cambridge Society of Edinburgh and of Cambridge University, and offered the toast to Cambridge University, and Margaret Wilkinson the toast to the

Northumbrian Cambridge Association. This was an evening to remember, although it also marked the start of a six-month hiatus in our activities with the advent of the coronavirus pandemic and its resultant restrictions.

Our Spring Outing to Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens, Ponteland on Saturday, April 18, 2020, our Spring Walk, at Raby Castle, County Durham, on Saturday, May 16, 2020, our Summer Outing, a boat trip to the Farne Islands on Sunday, June 21, 2020, our Freshers' Welcome Party at Mincoffs, Newcastle, on Monday, September 14, 2020, and our Annual Lecture, at the Royal Grammar School, Newcastle on Friday, September 25, 2020, have all had to be cancelled. Nevertheless, despite the pandemic, we have had a number of memorable events in this past year, and you can see reports and photographs of these on our website at <<http://www.northumbrian-cambridge.co.uk>>, which Gilbert Cockton has been managing. We have also rebooked these cancelled events for next year, when we hope that things will have improved. Please continue to consult the website for the Association's ongoing programme.

As you know, Andrena and I will be stepping down from the Committee after this (email-conducted) AGM, and I wish to thank all those who have supported us in these last years, especially my colleagues on the Committee. The Association's constitution requires annual (re)appointment of the members of the committee at the Annual General Meeting, and notice of this was given to all members in the summer mailing, along with the Committee's nominees for President, Hon. Secretary, and non-officio members, along with their details.

The current Committee is as follows: William R. Telford (President), Andrena E. Telford (Hon. Secretary), Susan Austin (Hon. Treasurer), Vinny Holden (Hon. Auditor), Peter Cleland, Gilbert Cockton, Heather Cordell, Colin Dunnighan. Judy Vigurs, our Membership Secretary, has recently resigned due to illness, and I have assumed this role for the moment.

Two of our current Committee members, Heather Cordell and Gilbert Cockton, have agreed to take over as President and Hon. Secretary respectively, and they have the full support of our current Committee. The other members of the current Committee are also willing to continue. Susan Austin has in addition agreed to take on the role of Membership Secretary (as well as that of Treasurer), and Gilbert Cockton to continue as Website Manager. Two further members of the Association, Robert Tindall and Andrew Young, have agreed to have their names put forward at the AGM, and also have the backing of our Committee.

The ongoing disposition of the Committee would, therefore, be as follows: Heather Cordell (President), Gilbert Cockton (Hon. Secretary/Website Manager), Susan Austin (Hon. Treasurer/Membership Secretary), Vinny Holden (Hon. Auditor), Peter Cleland, Colin Dunnighan, Arnold Fairless, Robert Tindall, Andrew Young (the constitution states that there should be not more than seven nor less than five non-officio members).

Unless you inform me to the contrary, I shall assume that you are happy to approve the new Committee, and give them your support. Likewise, unless I hear from you with your comments, queries or objections by Friday, September 25, I shall assume that you are happy to accept the other reports submitted as part of our AGM documentation (viz. Hon. Secretary's Report, Membership Secretary's Report, Treasurer's Report, Financial Statement for Year ending July 31, 2020, Auditor's Report) along with the Minutes of our last AGM (September 27, 2019).