



The Chepstow Society

Notes from the Executive Committee meeting on 14th June 2023 at the Drill Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Guy Hamilton, Keith James, Sallie James, David Nicholls, John Burrows, Angela Middleditch and Philippa Mercer

Apologies: Patrick Gale, Nicky Bailey, Annie Rainsbury and Marion Huckle

1. Guy opened the meeting, welcomed everyone. He introduced Philippa (Pip), and proposed that she be co-opted to the committee, subject to formal agreement at the monthly meeting. This was agreed.
2. The notes from the meetings held at the Drill Hall on 10th May 2023 had been circulated and agreed. It was agreed to change the order of items on the agenda, moving item 6,8 and 9 to the beginning of the meeting.

John asked that his Timeline project be added to the agenda. He continued that he hoped to have it completed by the end of the year, but before that he would like to involve local people to include more recent events.

Action: John

3. Committee responsibilities

Guy thanked all the committee members for their work for the Society and asked those who were present to confirm their continuing work in those roles: Patrick, Excursions Secretary and Simon Madison, Civic and Amenities Secretary had agreed previously. Angela, agreed to continue Membership Secretary, and Guy was happy to continue with Publications. Nicky and Marion indicated that they were happy to support the Society in any way they can, as and when the need arises. Jackie Thomas is happy to continue organising the refreshments at the monthly meetings.

Sallie is happy to continue as programme coordinator.

4. Treasurer's Report

David reported that there were still some outstanding invoices to pay, but the balance was still very good. He expressed his concerns that the Society still held a substantial amount in the deposit accounts, and this could become a concern for the Charities Commission.

Action: David to provide an up-dated account at the next meeting to include History Festival income and expenses.

5. Membership Report

Angela expressed her concerns that it was still difficult to get up-to-date information on membership, who had paid on BACS and details of those who had joined at the History Festival.

Action: David to regularly send Angela banks statements.

6. History Festival Review

All agreed that it was a huge success, several hundred attended and their feedback was very positive and the reviews and articles in the local press had been exceeding good.

7. The future of the Festival was discussed and the following questions arose:

The banners – can they be re-used? Guy thought that they could, if the date can be changed.

The photographs both on the boards and the screen were a great success, with many people asking to see them again. It was agreed to plan another event. There was a discussions their storage. Sallie suggested that the those on the screen could be shown at the beginning of future Society meeting while members were enjoying refreshments.

John suggested that maybe they could be shown as part of the Arts Festival, but this would depend on a suitable venue being available.

Action: Guy will contact the Museum.

After much discussion it was agreed that there will be a similar, but smaller event next year, 20th July was suggested, following the monthly meeting on Wednesday 17th July.

Action: Sallie will add to next agenda and provisionally book the DH

Guy asked David to thank Emma for her work on the publicity and Alison for the delicious cake.

8. Oral History Project

Guy suggested that the name be changed to Chepstow Memories. Again, there was a lot of interest in this project. He reported that 15 people have expressed an interest. It was agreed to form a sperate working group to take the project forward. Pip mentioned her past experience and recommended that Beth Thomas, from the National Society for Oral History be contacted for advice and support.

Action: Guy and Pip will contact Beth Thomas, feedback to members at the monthly meeting and arrange a meeting to discuss further.

9. Plaque for Henry Hodges

John reported that this was in the final stages, he shared a picture of the design, everyone agreed that it was a fitting tribute to Henry. John said that it was the plan to install it on one of the pillars near the war memorial. He added that the town council were sharing the costs with the Society. Guy added that the Society were still waiting for the other plaques that Ned had been commissioned to do.

Action: Guy will contact Henry's son to up-date him on the plaques progress. Also Guy will contact Ned for an up-date on the progress with the other plaques.

10. Speakers

Sallie shared the proposed programme for 2024, she explained that the 'key' speakers had mostly replied, and she was now in a position to fill in the gaps. Guy requested that the programme be completed and distributed to members as soon as possible.

Action: Sallie will complete by next meeting

11. Zoom

It was agreed that we continue to provide this facility to enable all members to enjoy the monthly meetings and that where speakers agreed that the meeting be recorded.

David Rock requested that a couple of members be trained in the set up and use of Zoom, as he was not always available.

Action: Guy will request volunteers at the next monthly meeting.

12. Walks

Keith gave Guy a list of the dates he was available. Jackie Neal has stood down from the executive committee but will, lead some walks. Tim Ryan is also happy to lead walks especially around Lower Chepstow and the Severn Princess as well as Garden City. David and Hilary Phillips have also expressed an interest in becoming walk leaders.

Action: Guy will co-ordinate.

13. Excursions

In Patrick's absence Sallie informed the committee of his ideas. There was considerable enthusiasm for most of the suggestions, although everyone agreed that something every month was a bit ambitious and maybe every other month would be more realistic.

All agreed that the visit to Bristol sounded very interesting, although the 8th July seemed a bit too soon, and suggested end of July would be more realistic. There was also not a great deal of interest in the race meetings or the Christmas markets, but they could be mentioned at the monthly meeting to gauge any interest Those members who had gone on the Worcester and Waverly trips reported how much they enjoyed them, all agreed that there was a great atmosphere and were looking forward to more excursions.

14. Date of Next meeting: Tuesday 26th September 2023

Action: Sallie will book the DH

The Meeting closed at 9.45