

July 16th, 2008
Annual General Meeting
Parliament Hall, University of St. Andrews
International Byron Society
34th International Byron Conference

Minutes

In the absence of the three presidents, Mr. Ken Purslow, Chairman of the Newstead Abbey Byron Society, took the chair and called the meeting to order at 4:00.

1. Apologies for absence:

Professor John Clubbe
The Earl of Lytton
Professor Byron Raizis
Mrs. Joan Blythe
Dr. Alan Raws

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting at the Island of San Servolo, Venice, presented by Professor John Clubbe and Mrs. Joan Blythe (USA) were distributed and accepted.

3. Matters arising (from the Minutes): None.

4. Treasurer's Report

A written statement of the receipts and payments for the years 2003 – 2008 (to June 30th 2008) was presented by Mr. Bernard Beatty, in the absence of Eric Wishart. Eric joined the meeting later. The presentation was accompanied by the following comments:

- a) Every national Byron Society is expected to pay a contribution each year which is taken for the year in which it is paid.
- b) Exception: The Japanese Byron Society has paid £ 150 on September 18th, 2007 for three years. The Receipts in the statement show that this contribution would be counted for the years 2007, 2008, 2009.
- c) The Executive Director proposed that the International Society give £ 500 towards the new heating system of St. Mary Magdalene Church in Hucknall. The proposal was seconded by Alan Gregory and was unanimously accepted by members present. Following the installation of the heating system and the necessary removal of the church pews, the top of the Byron crypt has been exposed. It is the intention to cover this with plate glass to make it secure and to define the edge of the crypt. The Secretary of the International Council will write to all national Byron Societies asking them for donations towards this project and the ongoing improvements of St Mary's Church.
- d) The website of the International Byron Society has been supported by the local council of Ashfield in the range of £ 1600 to 1700 during the past years. There are more than half a million hits of the website per year. Discussions concerning the expansion of the website are ongoing.

The statement about receipts and payments was accepted unanimously.

5. Election of Officers

The re-election of all Officers of the International Council was proposed by Mr. David Herbert, Newstead Abbey Byron Society, seconded by Mr J.B.Yount, American Byron Society, and agreed unanimously.

6. IBS Conference Greece 2009

In connection with the planned International Byron Conference in Greece 2009, (agreed on in 2007), Dr. Afrim Karagozi of the Albanian Byron Society, presented his project of a second conference in Tirana (Albania), 13th to 17th September 2009. He suggested an International Symposium in Tirana for two days, a visit to the National Historical Museum on the third day and visits to Kujar and Tepelene on the fourth and fifth day. The project will be supported by the British Council and the Albanian Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports. During their stay, a number of international delegates will be the guests of the Albanian Government. Delegates might fly from Athens to Tirana (which takes about one hour) and fly out from Tirana to Corfu.

The Chairman thanked Dr. Karagozi for his proposal and promised to ask the Greek Byron Society about the possible dates of the 2009 International Conference. Later Mr. Michael Kotonis advised that he had the dates which had been passed on to him by Professor Byron Raizis, the dates being September 6th – 12th, 2009).

7. IBS Conference 2010

Mrs. Marsha Manns and Mr. J.B.Yount, American Byron Society, reported about the state of the preparations for the 2010 Conference in Boston with an intended visit to the Byron Collection at the University of Delaware.

8. IBS Conference 2011

Professor Richard Cardwell, University of Nottingham, will approach his Spanish colleagues and ask them whether they would be ready to prepare an International Conference in Spain in 2011.

9. Suggestions for IBS Conference 2012

Mrs. Innes Merabishvili, President of the Georgian Byron Society, said that preparations were possible for an International Byron Conference in Georgia in 2012.

The Chairman agreed to add this possibility to the list of proposals for 2012.

Dr. Peter Cochran suggested a Byron-Pushkin-Conference at the Maxim-Gorki-Museum in Moscow, perhaps organised in conjunction with the North American Pushkin Association.

10. Reports from National Byron Societies

- a) Mr. Eric Wishart reported about the plans for a foundation meeting for the new Byron Society of Scotland on October 16th, 2008 at St.Cecilia's Hall. A constitution for the new Society has been devised.
- b) Mr. Olivier Feignier, French Byron Society, reported about the ending of the presidency of Madame Christiane Vigouroux in the beginning of 2008 and introduced himself as the newly elected President of the French Byron Society.
- c) Mr. Geoffrey Bray, representative of the Australian Byron Society, said that Mrs. Jacqueline Voignier-Marshall who had been head of the Australian Byron Society for a long time, died peacefully on November 24th, 2007. He recalled her great contribution, appreciation and affection for the International Byron Society.

All participants of the meeting suggested to record in the minutes that her death is considered as a great loss for the International Byron Society.

11. Any other business

a) **Elma Dangerfield Prize**

The Joint Treasurers said that Paul Douglass, one of the winners of 2007, has not yet come forward to receive his prize.

The winner of the 2008 Prize would be announced at the final Conference Dinner on July 18th, 2008. (Additional remark: The winner turned out to be Mr. Andrew Nicholson for his edition of „The Letters of John Murray to Lord Byron“.)

b) **International and national Activities 2007/2008**

The Chairman thanked all officers for their tremendous efforts throughout the year since the last International Byron Conference.

That was all the business of the meeting which ended at 5:05.

Brigitte Lohmar