

The Arthur Ransome Society

Literary and Resources Committee

Note of the Committee's 24th meeting, held on 14 November 2018, Birmingham

Present: Julian Lovelock (JL) (Chair), Krysia Clack (KC), Paul Crisp (PC), John Pearson (JP), Christine Rae (CR), Paul Wilson (PW), Peter Wright (PWr), Ann Farr (note-taker) (AF); in attendance: Mike Glover (MG)

1. Apologies: Chris Birt, Winifred Wilson

2. Minutes of the meeting 7th July 2018

Two corrections were noted, namely the ALS AGM to be hosted by TARS is scheduled for 2024 not 2022, and Nick Brewster's name was amended. Corrected version to be forwarded to PWr.

3 & 4. Matters arising/Discussion from Board meeting

Re the DVDs (Item 5), it was agreed that a further promotion in the Spring issue of *Signals* might boost sales. This should include a review or perhaps two, and some details about the interviewees who feature in the DVD. It was also agreed that, in general, wherever appropriate, reviews should carry reviewers' names.

Petrograd map (item 7): AF to continue to investigate protective storage.

5. 2019 Literary Weekend

PWr confirmed that the venue is to be the Royal Agricultural University, Cirencester, 13-15 September 2019. Accommodation includes singles, twins, doubles, with en suite facilities, and an attractive and comprehensive range of facilities needed for our event, notably a 17th century tithe barn for reception, refreshments etc. There is a refectory for our meals plus a special room for the Saturday dinner. Overall cost will be similar to that of Edinburgh in 2017. PWr asked for suggestions for speakers and topics for talks, long or short. All to consider and send ideas to Peter asap, as outline details are needed by 1 Mar 2019 for inclusion in *Signals*.

6. TARS Stall and merchandise

CR reported that her first few weeks in office had been busy with DVD orders. Amazon Publications were also popular items. Much discussion about merchandise followed, with PWr reporting on a Midlands company he had identified which could supply relatively small batches of basic items such as t-shirts, sweatshirts, polo shirts etc. with further orders of even a single item possible after the

initial set-up. It was noted that the literary executors have placed strict restrictions on the use of certain wording and required a new licence agreement to be signed. Any ideas from TARS must be vetted. The 'crossed flags' symbol is permissible but phrases such as "TARS Ahoy" or "TARS forever" are likely to be considered for Juniors only. Peter and Christine will visit the company to investigate quality and ask further questions.

There may be opportunities in future for TARS and ART (Arthur Ransome Trust) to sell merchandise through each other's stalls.

7. Alliance of Literary Societies

PW now has a copy of the ALS guidance notes for hosting their AGM. TARS is scheduled to do this in **2024**, not 2022 as previously thought.

8. Library report

i) WW had circulated a document regarding management changes at the premises at which the library is currently held. With the prospect of the rent (to be paid one year in advance) being increased threefold from 1 Feb 2019, clearly too high for TARS, somewhere else needs to be found urgently, within the next three months. (Three months' rent has been paid at the old rate, meanwhile.) WW had had preliminary discussions with the Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust in Dumfries which is planning to open in Spring 2019 as the Scottish Centre for Children's Literature and Storytelling. If its Trustees can offer suitable space, subject to mutually agreed terms and conditions, this would seem a good alternative for TARS and one which could be mutually beneficial in a number of significant ways. It would also enable Winifred to continue as our librarian, as she wishes to do. This committee therefore recommends further exploration of this potential home for our library and, with six TARS Trustees present, has passed a resolution to this effect, subject to the Treasurer's agreement. The Moat Brae Trustees have asked for a meeting with PW and WW, for further discussion.

Meanwhile, the committee has asked PW to explore local self-storage for housing the library as a temporary emergency measure. Volunteers might be needed at short notice to help with packing up the library prior to moving either to storage or to a new home.

ii) Text for Library webpage

WW had submitted a revised text which was endorsed unanimously.

9. Red Slipper and Junior Adventure Fund

At an earlier meeting it had been agreed that the full amount should be given to Karen Babayan, to help with her proposed book exploring the relationship between Ransome and the Altounyan children.

Junior Adventure Fund

~~PCW~~ reported that five young people had made use of this for a variety of activities. It was thought that the change of name had helped with take-up. £958 was paid out, leaving c£80 available, thus the fund needs topping up if applications, due in April 2019, are to be met. Ideally, the fund should receive an annual allocation, to be able to offer £250 per annum, with £1000 always held. PW will

discuss this with the TARS Treasurer. Paul Crisp and Diana Wright wish to stand down from managing the fund. A notice asking for volunteers needs to appear in *Signals*.

10. Amazon Publications

PC reported that there had been no response to the appeal in *Signals*. The most recent publication, *The twilight years* (Vol. 2), had had a mixed reception. If Amazon is to continue, a publication every two years is one option; or could overseas members be asked to provide a suitable volume?

11. Publications

The question of whether to offer publications electronically had been discussed at the most recent Board meeting (October 2018). There would be some administrative cost involved if this were to go ahead, but the question of whether members' subscriptions should be adjusted to reflect taking up an e-only preference [has still to be considered](#). It was felt that, since subscription levels are likely to be reviewed in the fairly near future, no change should be made at this stage, but that a question on an e-only preference should appear on the next subscription renewal forms. In any case, any proposed changes to subscriptions must be presented at an IAGM.

New editors are still sought for both *Mixed Moss* and *Signals*. An advertisement will appear in the next *Signals*. It was noted that *The Outlaw* will be issued as a separate publication in Summer 2019, not as a *Signals* insert.

JL asked whether there had been any movement towards setting a budget for publications. The Treasurer has allocated an amount but budgetary issues should be discussed by the Publications Committee.

12. Publicity and Recruitment

PWr had written about these matters in his first Chair's Notes in *Signals*. All members need to be aware of the need to increase membership and to think of ways in which this might be done. Raising awareness of the existence of TARS is key, whether by approaching any local sailing clubs who may have junior members or handing out leaflets at literary events or any other means, such as speaking on local or national media. KC asked if the membership form was available on the website where any member could print off a few copies as needed. MG would ask Barry Gouldbourne if batches of membership forms could be sent out to regional secretaries, as some people had not known how to get hold of the forms. The design of the website would be a substantive item at the next Board meeting.

13. Sharing knowledge/resources with other Ransome interest groups

It has become apparent that much confusion exists about the various Ransome organisations (TARS, Nancy Blackett Trust, ART, Sailing Swallow, Amazon Publications, where the literary executors fit in and who they are, etc.) and that clarification is required, especially since in certain instances members have made financial contributions and need to be clear about where their money has been spent. ART seems to give rise to the most confusion. A brief document is required to set the information out clearly.

14. AOB

AF reported that a planned meeting on the TARS archive had had to be postponed, owing to illness.

PWr reported on very recent news concerning the next TARS President but Board members needed to be notified before a wider announcement could be made.

15. Date of next meeting

The consensus among those present was for **Wednesday 13th March 2019** in Kendal.

AF

25/11/18