

## The Arthur Ransome Society

### Minutes of the 87<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Trustees, held in Birmingham on 9 October 2021

**Present:** Peter Wright, in the chair

Krysia Clack  
Michael Glover  
Susan Gouldbourne  
Marc Grimston  
Brian Key  
Iain Khan-Gilchrist  
John Pearson  
Kirstie Taylor  
Elizabeth Williams  
Diana Wright

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Jules Blue, Barry Gouldbourne, Linda Hendry and Peter Willis. The Board took note of Jules' note on certain points of the agenda.

#### 2. Chairman's introductory remarks

Peter had been in discussion with Chris Birt; they proposed, and the Board agreed, that the planned TARS trip to Estonia, Latvia and Russia should be postponed until 2023. Peter had filed the latest TARS magazines at the British Library. He would personally invite TARS President Libby Purves to the 2022 Literary Weekend.

PW

Peter noted that reconsideration of aspects of TARS' insurance arrangements should take place when the pandemic situation permitted and if possible in time for a report to the Board's next meeting.

PW,JP

He proposed that the membership committee should, following a suggestion at the 2021 Members' Forum, organise the preparation, for publication in *Signals*, of an annual record of the deaths of TARS members.

#### 3. Minutes of the 86<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board of Trustees, held via Zoom on 29 May 2021

These were adopted as a true record of the meeting, subject to the addition of Kirstie to the list of participants.

#### 4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Board Meeting of 29 May 2021

There were no matters arising. However, arising from the minutes of other recent meetings,

-Peter would include in a proposed letter on various matters to the Chief Executive of Lakeland Arts a proposal that the current loan agreement between TARS and the Lakeland Arts Trust on the care and display of the boat Coch-y-Bonddhu should be extended on its

expiry in December 2022;

-Peter would remind TARS Australia that their proposal for the next winner of the AustARS Cup should be in favour of an Overseas member.

PW

## 5. Report from the Literary and Resources Committee

Kryisia commented on the minutes, which had been circulated to the Board, of the committee's Zoom meeting of 14 September 2021. The Board noted in particular:  
-that Winifred Wilson would wish to stand down before long from her post as TARS Librarian, and that Julian Lovelock and Paul Wilson would be leaving the committee, whose new member, Elizabeth Williams, would succeed Paul as minutes secretary;  
-that the new TARS Book Club would be holding its first meeting, via Zoom, on 23 October;  
-that the committee intended to adopt at its next meeting, on the basis of a draft by Ann Farr, proposed guidelines for handling offers of AR documentation, etc. arising, for example, on the death of a member.

L&R Cttee

Peter commented on the note he had circulated on the Literary Weekend to be held in Oxford from 1 to 3 April 2022. A full programme had now been established; there remained a few uncertainties, including on whether Philip Pullman would agree to speak. As regards the post of librarian, the Board was conscious of the advantages of the library's remaining at Moat Brae and of the next librarian's living reasonably near Dumfries. Peter would shortly discuss possibilities with Winifred. He would also make contact with Christine Rae about the TARS stall, as she had not been able to take part in the committee's recent meeting.

PW

The committee had considered that AR's medical chest, currently held by Ann Farr, should if possible, and as suggested by Paul Flint, be made accessible to TARS members and the public. Peter would, in his letter to Lakeland Arts, raise the possibility of its being kept on show in one of its buildings. The chest could in any case be featured in *Signals* or on the website. The possibility of Lakeland Arts finding space for sorting potential TARS archive material should also be raised with them.

PW

TARS remained responsible for organising the 2024 AGM of the Alliance of Literary Societies. The Board requested the sub-committee charged with preparing this event to report on this matter to the next Board meeting.

## 6. Report from the Publications Committee

The committee had not needed to meet recently. Peter had circulated a brief favourable report on the publications situation. The Board congratulated all the members responsible for the latest issue of the three magazines. Barry Gouldbourne wished to retire from his chairmanship of the committee. The Board thanked him warmly for his contribution in that role. It considered that the committee should henceforward concern itself additionally with TARS publicity. It appointed Marc as the new chairman.

Some readers had reported difficulty in reading certain pages of *The Outlaw* printed on a dark background. This would be reported to Jules Blue. Some doubt had been expressed about whether the new environmentally friendly packaging was robust enough, especially when containing more than one magazine.

The Board noted recent contacts between Winifred and Peter Willis about the treatment and timing of the library supplement. It considered it preferable to expand *Signals* rather than produce the supplement as a separate document.

## 7. Financial matters

Susan had circulated the income and expenditure account for the period January to September 2021. A surplus was likely for the year as a whole, partly as a result of holding meetings via Zoom rather than in person. Susan confirmed that TARS was up to date with its payments. She would ask TARS membership secretary David Middleton whether it would help him to have the use of a TARS debit or credit card. SG

The Board agreed to maintain the current practice under which the UK TARS regions should not normally receive the annual stipend if their reserves exceeded £2,000.

Very little mail was being transferred from Abbot Hall during the current period of refurbishment there. On the other hand, TARS needed to keep an official address. The Board would return to this question at its next meeting. JP

## **8. Membership matters**

The Board noted with satisfaction, and warm thanks to Diana, that the new online membership system was operational. Diana explained her efforts to ensure respect by TARS of the data protection rules. The Board approved a further document proposed by her and entitled Data Protection/Privacy Policy. She was also preparing a document on terms and conditions, to be forwarded to the Board for a vote by email. DW,JP

The membership team should meet in the near future; it would be useful to have a brief note on who currently does what on membership. There should in particular be a review of the possibility of a 'rolling' system allowing a member's subscription year to begin on any date of the year.

## **9. 2022 IAGM**

Brian reported on preparations for the IAGM, expressing his thanks for the help received from David Middleton. A number of matters remained uncertain, in part because of the pandemic.

The Board decided that the full event, IAGM and accompanying activities, should all be held together on the proposed weekend of 26 to 29 August, with provision of a Zoom link to allow absent members to take part remotely in the IAGM and Members' Forum. Eastern region would explore how best to arrange this. E region

The Board noted that TARS Scotland continued to expect to organise the 2023 IAGM in or near Dundee, probably on the traditional dates of late May or early June.

## **10. Website**

Diana said that it was a major task for her to carry out certain proposals for amendment of the website. It would be desirable to publish instructions on how TARS members concerned could make amendments directly themselves.

## **11. Promotion of TARS**

Peter commented on the note he had circulated on this subject. The Publications Committee, with its new extended responsibilities, would need to give attention to proposing and encouraging promotional activities in the various areas mentioned in the note, together with other possible areas such as libraries. Marc would present proposals at the Board's next meeting. Pub Cttee

## **12. Possible celebration in 2024 of 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 1974 S & A film**

The Board was in favour of action by TARS in this context if it could be organised. Peter

would raise in his letter to Lakeland Arts the possibility of a joint initiative over a weekend or a single day. The letter should mention also the possibility of raising in the same context part of the cost of restoring Captain Flint's houseboat as used in the film. PW

### **13. Writing competitions for adults and children**

Susan confirmed that the children's competition would be for both writing and map-drawing. The adults' poetry competition had been announced in the recent *Mixed Moss*.

### **14. Junior members' log book scheme**

Peter commented on his note on improvements to this scheme already introduced by Midland region. Amanda Ardagh-Walter was now co-ordinating the scheme nationally. Board members and the other regions should seek to raise its profile, help inform junior TARS of events of interest to them and use the activity logos in their publicity.

### **15. Overseas and regional reports**

The regional representative Trustees gave brief oral reports on the situation and activities of their regions. A considerable range of activities continued in spite of the pandemic. Wide publicity should be given to a proposed AR London walk next (northern hemisphere) spring.

### **16. Other business**

There appeared to be scope for further Zoom interviews on the lines of that held recently with Mike Bender. Krysia would look into possibilities. KC

### **17. Date of next meeting**

By Zoom on Saturday 26 February 2022.

John Pearson  
Secretary  
19 October 2021