

The Arthur Ransome Society

Minutes of the 90th meeting of the Board, held in Peterborough on 12 November 2022

Present: Peter Wright (in the chair)
Kryisia Clack
Barbara Flower
Mike Glover
Susan Gouldbourne
Marc Grimston
John Pearson
Kirstie Taylor
Robert Welham
Elizabeth Williams
Peter Willis
Diana Wright

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Jules Blue, Linda Hendry and Iain Khan-Gilchrist.

2. Chairman's opening remarks

Peter welcomed to his first TARS Board meeting Robert Welham, nominated by East region as its new representative trustee. The Board duly appointed him.

Peter thanked Marc for finding suitable premises for the meeting. He informed the Board of the recent death of TARS member Jeremy Gibson; he had addressed condolences to his family.

Peter said that Susan would be standing down from the Board in 2023 under the six year rule, but it would be possible, if she wished, for her to remain TARS treasurer and be invited to its meetings as an adviser for a year, after which she could be elected to the Board again. This arrangement was acceptable to Susan and the Board.

Robert Thompson had made an official complaint to TARS about the choice of words employed by Chris Rosindale in respect of the provision of information by would-be members of the TARS Facebook group he had set up. Diana would propose to Chris a more welcoming text, which should not require the provision of a postal address.

Action: Diana

Peter would reply to Robert.

Action: Peter Wr

Naomi Hemingway, who had greatly enjoyed the recent IAGM and its cruises, had suggested the organisation of a short TARS holiday sailing trip. A notice should be published in *Signals* giving an outline of such an event and inviting declarations of interest.

Peter would give Naomi Marc's contact details in this context.

Action: Peter Wr

3. Minutes of the Board's 89th meeting, held on 22 August 2022

These were adopted as a true record. There were no points arising from them and not covered elsewhere on the day's agenda.

4. Report on the Literary and Resources Committee meeting of 28 September 2022

The Board took note of Krysia's report of the meeting.

Peter Wr said that for the 2024 Literary Weekend a promising location had been identified at the Carlisle campus of the university of Cumbria. The Board considered that April was probably the best time of year for this event.

TARS had been officially informed by Moat Brae that as from mid-January 2023 the TARS library would have to be relocated in its premises and double the existing rent would be charged. Christine Rae had offered to house the library at her house at Stockbridge in Hampshire (where the TARS stall was already accommodated). The Board decided to accept this kind offer and that the transfer of the books should be organised and paid for by the society within the Moat Brae deadline. Peter would thank Christine on the Board's behalf and contact Winifred Wilson, inter alia about obtaining quotes for the removal. The TARS publicity flyer would need amendment as a result of this development, of which the library's insurers should be informed.

Action: Peter Wr, John

The Board noted with satisfaction that a grant from the Red Slipper Fund had been agreed to help Kirsty Nichol Findlay with her research on 'Ransome and Modernism'.

5. Report on the Publications Committee meeting of 22 October 2022

Minutes of the meeting had been circulated to the Board. Owing to pressure of other work Marc had had to stand down from chairmanship of the committee; Peter Wr had chaired the recent meeting. As regards publicity, he had had positive contacts with Chris Eldon Lee about opportunities offered by the forthcoming performances of the 'Winter Holiday' play. Elizabeth and Krysia would arrange for the implementation of these. **Action: Elizabeth, Krysia**

6. TARS Presidency

The Board discussed the dozen or so names which its members had suggested as a new TARS President to be elected at the 2023 IAGM. Each of the members present then indicated in a secret ballot their first and second preferences, account being taken also of indications received from the absent members. This produced a clear favourite and second choice. Peter Wr and John would make the necessary approaches.

Action: Peter Wr, John

7. TARS Chairmanship

Peter intended to step down from the chairmanship at the 2023 IAGM; a successor would need to be appointed by the Board at its meeting immediately following the IAGM. The Board considered a number of possible successors. Mike would be prepared, if that would help, to stand in as Chair for one year.

A number of Board members would be standing down at the 2023 IAGM under the six year rule. The Board discussed possible candidates to replace them; a number of them would be approached.

Action: Peter Wr, John

8. TARS finances

Susan presented the table which had been circulated to the Board, containing income and expenditure figures for the year so far and a proposed outline budget for 2023. The Board approved the budget proposal, subject to a number of modifications discussed and agreed by the meeting. The budget provided for a result close to balanced.

The Board discussed and approved a proposal to offer, at the forthcoming 'Winter Holiday'

performances, a temporary reduction of the subscription for new family memberships.

9. Future care and operation of the boats 'Swallow' and 'Amazon'

The Board thanked Diana for her detailed paper and all the hard work lying behind it. It agreed that any solution officially involving TARS would need to take the form of a partnership between the society and a competent entity such as a sailing club or, as first suggested at the meeting, an enterprise such as Hunter's Yard at Ludham.

In the first instance, a further attempt should be made to establish contact with the Raymond Priestly Centre and the Glenridding sailing club (on Ullswater). **Action: Diana**
An approach should also be made to Hunter's Yard, and quotations should be sought for a survey and valuation of both boats. This should be mentioned in *Signals*, with a reference to possible TARS members' contributions to the cost of these. **Action: Peter Wi, Marc**
These actions should be completed in good time for the Board to decide follow-up at its spring 2023 meeting.

10. TARS archives

The Board adopted Peter Wr's proposal for the society's archive material, as from January 2023, to be brought together, sorted, catalogued and housed at Cambridge Road methodist church in Birmingham, at a cost of £500 per annum, with the option of an alternative long term home being kept open should better premises be found. John should inform Elizabeth Haworth and Chris Birt of this decision and invite them to arrange, at TARS' expense, the transfer of the archive material held by them to the Birmingham centre; he would transfer there the archive material which he had received from his predecessor as secretary Peter Aitchison. **Action: John** Peter Wr would contact Ted Alexander to inform him of this new arrangement. **Action: Peter Wr**

The Board agreed with a recent proposal from Stephanie Phillips Morgan to transfer certain TARBID archive material from floppy disk to a modern format. Krysia would ask Stephanie to obtain a quote for this. **Action: Krysia**

11. Cooperation with Lakeland Arts (LA)

Peter Wr reported that a new five year agreement had been signed with LA for the care and display of the boat Coch-y-Bonddhu at the LA's Windermere Jetty Museum. LA had, however, said they had no space at the moment for the care and display of AR's medicine chest. Peter would inform Ann Farr about this, as she at present held the chest. It could be moved for the time being to the new archives premises. **Action: Peter Wr**

LA remained interested in organising with TARS in 2024 a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the 1974 Swallows and Amazons film; they would as soon as possible propose a date for this.

Please see also the reference in the following item to the ALS 2024 AGM.

12. Alliance of Literary Societies (ALS)

The Board thanked Amanda Ardagh-Walter for her note on this, which referred to:

- the possibilities for publicising TARS events on the ALS website, etc.;
- the scope for preparing a text for TARS to be featured as the ALS 'society of the month';
- ALS workshops of interest on subjects such as copyright, intellectual property rights and branding.

Amanda, a member of the ALS Board, had also mentioned a forthcoming ALS competition entitled 'Better drowned than duffers'; it was likely that Winifred Wilson and Peter Willis

would prepare entries for this.

The Board approved with satisfaction Amanda's provisional agreement with LA that the Windermere Jetty Museum should be the site of the ALS 2024 AGM, to be organised by TARS on Saturday 18 May 2024. The Board approved in this context an initial payment of £600; this would be recovered out of participants' fees.

13. TARS public liability insurance

Peter Wr reported on his and John's meeting earlier in the summer with their contact at the agents for this insurance policy. It had been confirmed that the policy broadly protected TARS at Board and regional level but did not directly insure individual TARS members. The meeting had underlined the importance of TARS event organisers preparing serious event risk assessments. Mike would send the Board examples of such assessments.

Action: Mike

14. AusTARS Cup 2023

The Board approved the proposal that Peter Wr should suggest to AusTARS to nominate a particular Australasian member as winner of the cup in 2023; the Board would then formally approve the nomination.

Action: Peter Wr

15. TARS IAGMs 2023 and 2024

Kirstie gave a progress report on TARS Scotland's preparation of the 2023 IAGM in Dundee. It would be possible for those participants who so wished to follow the coronation ceremonies. Participants would need to book their own accommodation.

Peter Wr said the 2024 IAGM would be held in August (as in 2022), probably in the Chatsworth area of Derbyshire.

16. Regions' and overseas reports

A number of the regional representatives were disappointed by the level of participation in their events. This might result in part from a temporary disinclination, following the pandemic, to get about as much as before. However, events on Zoom could attract members who would not have wished or been able to attend an event in person.

Kryisia presented emails from overseas sections in North America and Australasia. AusTARS had made, on data security grounds, a request not to email their members directly. There appeared to be some uncertainty about how overseas coordinators in the USA and Canada should operate. The Board hesitated to impose detailed procedures, as situations differed from place to place. Kryisia would contact the overseas regions again, and an article could be prepared for the spring *Signals*, drawing attention for example to the relatively high proportion of members living overseas, their freedom to administer themselves, their excellent magazines...

17. Other business

Peter Wr said that David Middleton intended to stand down as membership secretary in 2024 (his 80th birthday). It could be desirable to simplify so far as possible the systems and procedures to be operated by his successor.

Peter would welcome, for the revised flyer, good photos of members in action at TARS events.

18. Date of next meeting

Confirmed as Saturday 25 February 2023, via Zoom.

John Pearson
Secretary

21 November 2022