

The Arthur Ransome Society

Minutes of the Society's 91st Board meeting, held on Zoom on 25 February 2023

Present:

Peter Wright (in the chair)
Jules Blue
Krysia Clack
Barbara Flower
Mike Glover
Susan Gouldbourne
Marc Grimston
Linda Henry
John Pearson
Kirstie Taylor
Robert Welham
Elizabeth Williams
Peter Willis
Diana Wright

1. Minutes of the Board's previous meeting (12 November 2022)

These were approved by the Board as a true record.

2. Matters arising

Peter Wr said that the publicity leaflet 'An Introduction to the Arthur Ransome Society' required revision because of recent developments such as the removal of the Library. He asked Board members to send him for the new edition high-quality photos of TARS members enjoying TARS events. This request should be mentioned in 'Signals' too.

Action Peter Wi.

It was noted that the 'joining' wording on the TARS Facebook site had been modified and improved.

3. Future of the boats 'Swallow' and 'Amazon'

Since the Board's previous meeting the two boats had been taken to Hunter's Yard for examination, and the Yard had now reported on the nature and approximate cost of the work required to fit them for commercial operation as additions to their fleet.

After detailed discussion the Board decided the following:

-TARS should purchase 'Amazon' for £400 and 'Swallow' for £1; repair and restoration work, financed by TARS, should be carried out by the Yard with a view to enabling 'Amazon' to be sailed commercially in 2023 and 'Swallow' in 2024. In the case of 'Swallow' the extent and timing of the work should be agreed between TARS and the Yard;
-a TARS working group should be set up to co-operate with Hunter's Yard in the treatment and operation of the two boats. Its members should be Marc, Susan, Peter Wi, Diana and Dermot Stanley;

-a written agreement between TARS and the Yard should be drafted; it should be valid for a specific initial period and also provide for either party to withdraw from the agreement after a period of notice;

-the finances of the project should be kept separate from other TARS finances; Susan would continue to explore the issue of whether *Sail Ransome* would be the most appropriate vehicle to adopt given ongoing difficulties of establishing whether it was a CIC or not; a TARS fund should be opened, to which TARS members should be invited to contribute. The £5,000 recently bequeathed to TARS by Malcolm Porteous should be placed in the fund;

-publicity for the venture should be conducted by both TARS ('Signals', website, Facebook...) and the Yard.

Action: new group

4. TARS Presidency

A reply was awaited from the number one candidate. The Board decided that if that person declined to serve, a new second choice option should be approached.

5. TARS Board membership and Chair

Peter Wr, Linda and Susan would be standing down from the Board at the coming IAGM under the six year rule. Peter had approached, about the possibility of their joining the Board, Amanda Ardagh-Walter, David Butters and Rachel Chalmers. Amanda was unable to make herself available because of other commitments; David, and almost certainly Rachel, were willing to be candidates. The Board agreed that David should be formally proposed by Diana and seconded by Krysia, while Rachel should be proposed by Linda and seconded by Peter Wi.

Action John

The next Chair of the Board should be appointed by the Board at its meeting immediately after the IAGM.

Peter thanked the departing members for their contribution to the Board's constructive work; Mike thanked Peter on behalf of the Board for his efficient and good-humoured chairmanship.

6. Report of the Literary and Resources Committee

Krysia reported on the committee's Zoom meeting of 20 February. The TARS Library had been successfully moved from Moat Brae in Dumfries to Christine Rae's house in Hampshire. Winifred Wilson had recommended that despite the move, the practice of donating books to be given to children visiting Moat Brae should continue. This should be mentioned in 'Signals'.

Action Peter Wi

The new Birmingham premises for the TARS archives were now available for use and transfer there of potential archive material should soon begin. To begin with, this would be mainly on paper, but consideration would need to be given to how best to treat potential archive material in electronic form.

7. Report of the Publications and Publicity Committee

Peter Wr reported that no major problems were currently faced by the editors of the three TARS publications. Julian Lovelock would take the lead on the 2023 edition of 'Mixed Moss'; Peter himself might handle the 2024 edition.

The current performances of the 'Winter Holiday' play were providing good opportunities for publicising TARS. We had successfully managed to get a full page advert in the programme and this included the children's competition agreed at the Board's previous

meeting.

8. TARS 2023 IAGM, Dundee

Kirstie reported that the level of bookings was disappointing so far. The Board discussed and clarified a number of aspects of the weekend. It was noted that the IAGM agenda, to be sent out with the next 'Signals', would need to state how to take part in the meeting and Members' Forum by Zoom.

Action Kirstie

9. S & A 1974 film 50th anniversary, 2024

Peter and John had just had a Zoom meeting with representatives of Lakeland Arts, which had confirmed their intention to co-operate with TARS in planning a rich event at the Windermere Jetty Museum. Of the three possible dates identified at the meeting, the Board decided on the weekend of 29/30 June; this should be communicated to Lakeland Arts.

Action Peter Wr

A joint TARS-Lakeland Arts working group should be established to take planning forward; on this TARS should be represented by Peter Wr, Sophie Neville, Susan, Marc, David Butters and perhaps Krysia. These should probably have an initial TARS-side discussion before meeting with Lakeland Arts. Liaison with the Arthur Ransome Trust would be desirable.

The event would probably have some financial implications for TARS (for example, travel expenses for members of the film's cast).

10. Alliance of Literary Societies' 2024 AGM

The Board approved with satisfaction and thanks Amanda's proposal that the Alliance's AGM, to be hosted by TARS, should be held on Saturday 18 May 2024 at the Windermere Jetty Museum. John would so inform her [done].

Winifred Wilson would probably make a contribution to the ALS journal's forthcoming feature 'Better drowned than duffers'.

11. 2024 TARS literary weekend

Peter reported that the Carlisle branch of Cumberland University would unfortunately not be able to accommodate the Weekend over Easter. He would seek another venue; members of the Board made a number of suggestions.

12. AusTARS Cup 2023

The Board endorsed AusTARS' proposal for the 2023 winner of the Cup, whose name would be announced at the forthcoming IAGM.

13. Overseas, regional and other reports

Krysia commented on her continuing contacts with the TARS Overseas groups. There was some feeling that 'Signals' gave too little attention to these groups and their members; this should be rectified if possible, inter alia by drawing attention to the groups' excellent journals. Peter Wr would give Krysia and Jules details of his TARS contact in Japan.

Action Peter Wr

The regional representative trustees gave brief oral reports. In some regions the numbers

attending events remained lower than before the pandemic; nevertheless, a number of regions were planning a full programme of monthly events in 2023. Northern region's 'books for schools' initiative was a success.

The Board took note with thanks of Linda's email summarising her and others' activity on certain of the social media. These could be important to TARS even if many members did not use them.

14. Other business

Susan informed the Board that final figures showed a £1,400 surplus for TARS in 2023.

15. Date and place of next meeting

Sunday 7 May, Dundee, immediately after the Members' Forum.

John Pearson

TARS secretary

3 March 2023