

SUSSEX FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

Registered Charity 273726

Minutes of the 36th Annual General Meeting of the Sussex Family History Group
held on Saturday 28th March 2009 at 4.00 pm
at Clair Hall, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 3DN

Present at the AGM were Lord Teviot (President), Mr Colin Excell (Chairman), Miss Judy Pepper, Mrs Val Orr and 74 members of the Group.

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from the following members: Peter Lansberry, Karen and Peter Hayward, Derek Terrell, Lady Teviot, Joan Goddard, Wyn Burgess, Frank Leeson, Philip Lucas, Roy and Mary Monnery and Clem and Betty Frank.

2 Acknowledgement of representatives of Subscribing Societies

There were no subscribing societies present.

3 Minutes of the 35th AGM (as published in the June 2008 *Sussex Family Historian*)

It was agreed that the Minutes were a true record of the AGM held on 12th April 2008, and they were signed by the President.

4 Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

5 Chairman's Report on the activities of the past year

Lord Teviot complimented Colin Excell on how well he had done during the year. Colin had been encouraged by those who had responded to appeals for volunteers. Terry Mitchell had come forward to take over from Judy Pepper as Treasurer; Derek Terrell had agreed to become Conference Organiser, Sheila Maynard had passed on the local history database to Julie Goucher. Sincere thanks were given to all those who were standing down. Several of the databases had been uploaded onto "Frontis", a project to display our data online with free access to members. Thanks were due to Brian Cutler, Mick Henry and Judy Excell for the work they had done on this. The Chairman's Report is printed in full at the end of the Minutes.

It was proposed that the Chairman's Report be accepted by Eric Appleton and seconded by Ninka Willcock and agreed unanimously.

6 Treasurer's Report and to approve the Accounts

Judy Pepper thanked Peter Lansberry and David Nicholas of Spofforths for providing the Independent Examination to the accounts, at no charge. The Group had had another good year with a surplus of income over expenditure of £19,000. It had been agreed to take external advice regarding the security of cash investments, and maximising investment of the Group's finances. The Treasurer's Report is printed in full at the end of the Minutes.

Michael Burchell proposed that the Treasurer's Report be accepted, and this was seconded by Dr Alan Beattie and agreed unanimously.

7 Election of the Officers and Members of the Executive Committee

The following members had been nominated:

POSITION	NAME	PROPOSED	SECONDED
Officers			
Chairman	Colin Excell	Mick Henry	Judy Pepper
Vice Chairman	Mick Henry	Christine Payne	Lady Mary Teviot
Treasurer	Terry Mitchell	Judy Pepper	Trevor Hanson
Secretary	Val Orr	Mick Henry	Judy Excell
Committee Members			
	Trevor Hanson	Audrey Jackson	Joan Peebles
	Terry Kettell	Susanne Webb	Sue Peyman-Stroud
	Mike Morley	Rosemary Appleton	Eric Appleton
	David Wicks	Colin Excell	Val Orr

The President proposed that these nominations be accepted en bloc and this was agreed unanimously.

8 Nomination and confirmation of the appointment of the Independent Examiners of the Accounts

The appointment of Spofforths as the Independent Examiners of the Accounts was proposed by Dr Brian Cutler and seconded by Roy Winchester and agreed unanimously.

9 To approve the annual subscription for the following year

It was agreed that there should be no increase in the subscription rates for next year. A question was raised on whether there should be a reduced subscription for senior citizens. This had been discussed recently at an executive committee meeting, and it had been decided that the current rate of £11 represented good value, and should not be lowered for senior citizens.

10 To discuss and take decisions on any submitted motions

a. Progress of 'The Keep' project (as requested at 2008 AGM)

The Chairman gave a background summary of 'the Keep' project. There had been several meetings to discuss progress. In July 2008 ESRO put in a bid for a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, and in December they were advised that this had been unsuccessful. Discussions will resume later this year.

Our Group had been searching for a site for the SFHG Library, and if we became part of 'the Keep' there would be a designated room with capacity for our Library collection. We have set aside funds towards this without contractual obligation. A new library rota for volunteers would be arranged for the site.

11 Any Other Business

There were no other submitted questions to discuss.

12 Date and Venue of the Next Meeting

It was proposed to hold the next Conference and AGM on 20th March 2010 at Clair Hall, and confirmation of this date would be given as soon as possible. The meeting closed at 4.40 pm.

CHAIMAN'S REPORT

Conference 28 March 2009

The last year has been challenging for me with a number of positions which needed to be filled.

Clem Frank, who had so ably organized this conference for many years, stood down at the end of last year's conference and faced with the prospect of finding a new Conference Organizer, Treasurer, Secretary and Local History database organizer, I decided to take on the Conference myself for this year.

Wendy Deamer stood down in July from the post of Education Officer and my thanks to her for the work she put in.

I was, however, very encouraged by the response to my appeals in the Historian and Sussex Link and I am pleased to report that we have a new Treasurer (Terry Mitchell) a new organizer of the Local History Database (Julie Goucher), a new Conference Organizer (Derek Terrell) and a rejuvenated Secretary in Val Orr.

Frances Rawlings, who took over the Members' Interests database last year, very sadly died in December. -- A great blow to us all -- I was going to appeal for someone to take on the Members' Interest database from Judy Excell as soon as possible, but I am advised that someone has come forward.

I would like to say a sincere 'thank you' to all who have stood down, for their many years of dedicated service to S.F.H.G. – and welcome to those who have taken up the reins.

What has been happening within the Group? – Well the early part of 2008 was taken up with the discussions over the proposed new E.S.R.O. known as the 'Keep'. – In August they put forward a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund which sadly was turned down – this means it is back to the drawing board. – Sussex Family History Group's interest in the project is that we were to have a room of our own within the Record Office which would have housed our Library with full IT connections. For this facility we would contribute to the overall cost. With the current economic and financial turmoil the whole project is currently on hold but not abandoned.

There has been magnificent work getting the baptisms index, census indexes and SPI loaded onto Frontis which is an ongoing project to display our data online. This will shortly be available to members free of charge and an announcement can be expected very soon either in Sussex Link and/or the June Historian.

I would like to thank Brian Cutler, Mick Henry and Judy Excell for the incredible amount of time they have put into this Project.

I am glad to see John Commins has made a good recovery from his recent spell of ill health.

To finish off a huge thank you to all who have helped with the organization of today.

TREASURER'S REPORT

AGM 28 March 2009

I would like to thank Peter Lansberry and David Nicholas at Spofforths in Horsham for all their assistance and advice, and for providing the Independent Examination to the accounts, at no charge.

The accounts were approved by the trustees on 24 February 2009.

The group had another good year with a surplus of income over expenditure of £19k, slightly down on the previous year.

The group used funds this year to attend the "Who do you think you are" event at Olympia. It also paid to install broadband and on-line facilities at the library in Lewes and invested in a digitisation project of library records. Capital expenditure in the year included a laptop, three screens and display stands to take to fairs.

The group was again able to make grants of £500 each to the records' offices of East and West Sussex.

The group has agreed to take external advice, regarding the security of our cash investments, and the maximising investment income.

I do not propose to increase in subscriptions in 2009.

I would like to thank everyone for their assistance and support in my role as treasurer over the last few years. I am delighted to be able to hand over the role to Terry Mitchell, who was coopted to the Executive committee in July. I am sure Terry, will, with the other trustees, take the group forward to continuing success.