

Minutes of the AGM of the Friends of Herculaneum Society held on Saturday 5 November 2016 at 14.15 in the Lecture Theatre of the National Maritime Museum Greenwich, London

Present: *Trustees:* Robert Fowler (Chair), Daniel Delattre, Kevin Lavery, Carol Scott, Kate Starling, *Secretary* Krystyna Cech, *Members:* Alison Alden, John & Joy Bithell, Alison Carter, Sanne Christensen, Marsali Coles, Lindsey Davis, Joëlle Delattre, Judy Fowler, Alicja & Michael Hollings, Peter Pickering, Patrick Pollard, William Poole, Peter Spital, Anne-Marie Svensson, Djamila Zaid.

Apologies: Gillian Austin, Bonnie Blackburn, Kay Byers, Isobel & Andrew Hamilton, Hannes Hoffmann, Philip Hooker, Ia McIlwaine, Dirk Obbink, Alison Palmer, Gill & Roy Reeve, Daniel Reshete, Harry Summerton, Ken Walker, Nigel Wilson.

The minutes of the 2015 AGM were received.

The accounts of the Herculaneum Society and the Friends of Herculaneum Society were presented and received by the members.

Robert Fowler reported on the recent and future activities of the Society. Also, Kate Starling who organised the 2016 Herculaneum Congress, gave her report.

The Accounts

For the first time, there is only one set of accounts due to the merger of the Herculaneum Society and Friends of Herculaneum Society. The accounts are not yet perfectly aligned owing the deficit of £6517 taken over from the last Friends accounts, which represented several individual items. In effect the Society has £17,000 in reserve, £11,000 of which is restricted and £6000 for general purposes. There was a £4000 loss on the 2 Summer schools and an increase of £1000 for Bursaries. In the coming year, additional donations are expected. Also, there was a profit from the Herculaneum Congress which will be reflected in next year's accounts. In summary, the Society is ticking over financially but slipping a bit year on year. One way forward is to raise membership fees.

The 2016 Herculaneum Congress

Kate Starling presented her report on the Congress with the following summary points:

- There was too much in the programme
- Christian and Katerina were appreciated by participants
- Extra access (to the depository) and sites to the west of Naples were highlights
- Next time the site visit to Herculaneum should be expanded
- Changes to catering need to be made
- There needs to be better briefing before site visits
- Allowances have to be made for the different speeds/knowledge among attendees
- Villa Maiuri reception should be the formal start of the Congress and used as an occasion to inform and brief everyone about the program

A vote of thanks was proposed by John Bithell for all the hard work of Kate and Krystyna in organising the event.

General disappointment was expressed about not getting into the Villa of Papyri. Bob said it was mainly due to insufficient staff and safety issues.

Society Events in the interim year between Congresses

It was suggested that there is a lot to see in Roman Londinium. A scholarly study day in Oxford was also proposed.

Membership fees

It was announced that membership fees will be rising in the coming year and that at present the new fees are not decided on.

The Vision

Bob expressed the desire that the Society should play a more active role in the future. Herculaneum will be more independent with the new Director. It is hoped that an international 'Coalition of the Willing' will make an impact in the future to safeguard the site and assist in its program of conservation and development. This Coalition comprising all the public figures and academics with a genuine interest in the site must sign up to a common script and talk with one voice to be effective.

It was suggested that a meeting in the UK of Italian key players, such as the new director, should be held in the near future.