



NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Registered Charity No. 268516

Patron: HRH The Duke of Gloucester, GCVO

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR 2020

Monday, 18 January 2021

via Zoom at 7pm

The meeting was chaired by Mike Curtis. Total attendance was 29 people. John Williams was thought to be furthest away on line - in Kent.

- 1) **Apologies for absence were received from members:** Theodora Anastasiadou
- 2) **Minutes of the AGM 2019:** were sent to members on 14 January by email and accepted by the members at AGM.
- 3) **Report of the Secretary and Journal Editor for 2020:** were sent to members on 14 January by email. At the AGM Andy Chapman summarised the main points of the report for the meeting. All bulletin and NAS journals are now freely available online with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). These comprise more than 200 articles and 100 notes. Work on the next volume, 42, was progressing and it will appear in 2021.

Mike Curtis proposed thanks for Andy's work for NAS. This was seconded by Gill Johnson.

- 4) **The Treasurer's Statement of Accounts:** were sent to members on 14 January by email. Andy said we had a healthy bank balance.
- 5) **Election of Officers and Members of council:**

Secretary: Andy Chapman

Treasurer: Andy Chapman

Meetings/minutes Secretary: Rob Atkins

Membership Secretary: Pat Chapman

NASNEWS editor: Mark Holmes:

Journal Editor: Andy Chapman

Other members of council:

Existing members: Mike Curtis, Graham Cadman, Brian Giggins, Stephen Hollowell, Roy Friendship-Taylor and Adam Sutton

At the AGM members were asked if they were happy for all to be re-elected as a group. All were accepted by the members attending

- 6) **Any other business**

There was no other business.

The AGM was followed by the public lecture: *Historic town buildings of Northamptonshire*, delivered by Brian Giggins. Questions were taken after the lecture. Mike Curtis proposed a vote of thanks for a very interesting and stimulating talk. Meeting finished c.8.20pm.

Northamptonshire Archaeological Society

Report of the Secretary, Journal Editor and Treasurer for 2020

Secretary

Well, what can be said about this unique and disturbing year within all our lives? As I originally wrote this report on 1 November we were poised for a second national lockdown, with the date for a return to something more normal receding beyond the once hoped for, if not once expected, prospect of it being Christmas. As I review and revise this report in January 2021 we are now into our third lockdown with daily cases above the levels recorded in April 2020 and daily deaths fast approaching the previous high, while hospitals are close to breaking point. The only hope now is a rapid rollout of the vaccines to bring the numbers down again.

Speaking as someone retired, it has made little difference to our home life, apart from fewer shopping trips, but it is the absence of life beyond the home, no visits to the Art Galleries and Jazz Clubs of London, and several booked lectures to local societies were all cancelled, as were guided walks at Stanwick Lakes around the old Raunds Area Project sites, and involvement in the public events at Stanwick that were also all cancelled.

For the society it meant that there was no prospect of any site visits or other public meetings. After a normal February committee meeting, when Mike Curtis was appointed as Chair for the year and Andy Chapman as Vice Chair, and Adam Sutton was welcomed as a new member, it was to be nearly the end of September before the next one, and that was achieved virtually via Zoom. At that meeting it was decided that the AGM would be postponed until January 2021, and would then be a virtual meeting and public lecture via Zoom.

The day to day business of the society carried on. There were slightly more requests than usual for articles from past journals, as some people got involved in Lockdown research projects, sometimes picking up on old research they had set aside in busier times.

Of archaeological events beyond the society, the big regret is that we still do not have a functioning County Archive. The buildings at Chester Farm (Irchester Roman Town) were nearing completion in 2019 when the construction company went bankrupt. Since then there has been no further progress, apart from the appointment of an archivist who has archives but nowhere to put them. This situation would be bad enough on its own, but with the transition from one county council to two authorities, South Northamptonshire and East Northamptonshire, due to go ahead in 2021, the future of the whole Chester Farm project is clearly uncertain.

In addition, there is also the question of either the retention of the Northamptonshire Records Office (including the Historic Environment Record) as a single entity covering the historic county, or will it be split in half to serve each authority? Some years ago when Bedfordshire was split in two, the resulting new office for the Central Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record was so small that maps and larger documents had to be spread across tables in the adjacent café.

Journal Editor

Journal 40, 2019 had been distributed to all members and institutions by the end of 2019.

Through January and February I was focussed on business outwith NAS (to use the useful Scottish phrase), finalising my last backlog out-of-county publication on an Iron Age settlement at Coton Park, Rugby. There followed an immediately pre-lockdown trip to the Palaeolithic caves of Northern Spain (we flew back on Saturday evening from a near deserted Bilbao airport and a Spain poised for lockdown on the Monday, and arrived in a London that still seemed almost oblivious to what was about to descend on us all, but that's another story).

Work was then resumed both on volume 41, *The Archaeology of Medieval Northampton* special edition of the journal, and also on the preparations for getting the legacy of the journal backlog online through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).

The preparations for the journal backlog have involved creating a database of all relevant details, the metadata, for every journal and its contents. Over the forty volumes this comprises 223 main articles, mainly excavation reports, and 120 shorter notes, largely on sites and finds, along with the annual roundups, reviews of publications and obituaries.

The metadata amounts to 1416 lines of data and some 40 columns, although not all columns apply to every entry. A tedious process best achieved in many short-sessions, usually one journal at a time, so you can retain some focus and sanity. The data and files were eventually deposited with the ADS, and there followed a period of tracking down the inevitable errors. Once the corrections were made by ADS and we paid the bill for deposition, it all went online with ADS at the end of November, making the contents freely available to all worldwide, and I hope some members have had a look at the site.

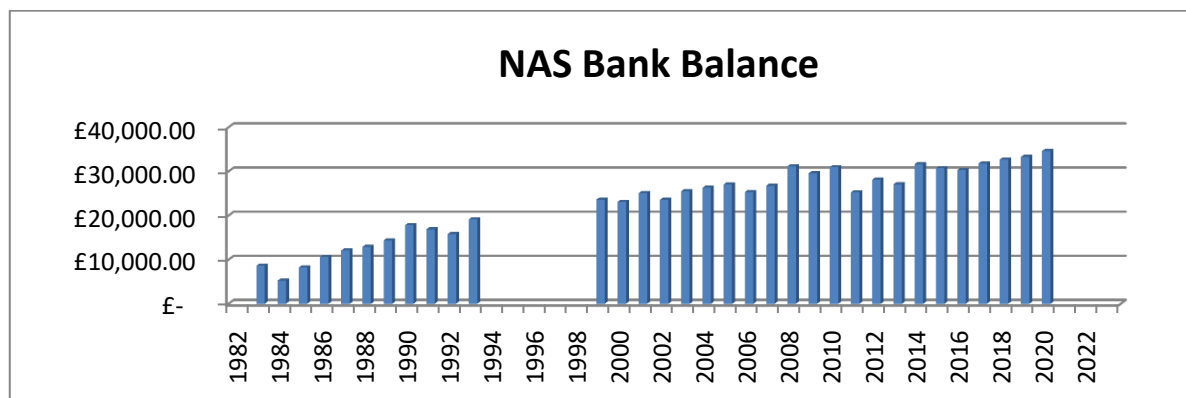
Altogether, it has taken some 13 years to bring this to fruition, starting in 2007 with the scanning of the old Bulletins, volumes 1-8, and from 2008 the process of sending out batches of journals for commercial scanning began. The more recent editions, of course, are fully digital from the start.

Subsequently, there was a period of a few years when copies of articles were available online through the CBA ArchLibrary, but this resource was badly advertised and difficult to find once they had redesigned their website to suit a populist approach. As a result, it was poorly used, other societies didn't join the original group of members and the CBA eventually closed it down. However, ADS is now the go-to site for digital archaeological material, so the journal should now be both digitally safe and accessible to all for many years, hopefully decades, to come.

The aim now is to complete the *Archaeology of Medieval Northampton* volume as soon as possible in the New Year, and it looks like publication may coincide with a return to something more normal in the spring of 2021, perhaps enabling both a society and a public book launch, as we are hoping for sales beyond the membership. But there is still much writing and editing to complete in the early months of 2021.

Treasurer

The Accounts for 2019-2020 show a small profit over the course of the year, so the cost of the journal has again been more than covered by the accumulated income from members, institutions and page charges to commercial contributors (plus a little interest from our building society account and income from copyright payments through the publishers licensing organisation). So at the end of the financial year we had over £34,000.00 in the bank; the highest bank balance in the history of NAS. Current spending plans will have an impact on the reserves, as both the cost of deposition with ADS (a little over £2000.00) and the cost of publishing another journal will fall within the current financial year, and we also have three agreed grant payments to make.



On the other hand, we intend to give the Northampton special edition an ISBN book number and will print 500 copies to allow for members, institutions and sales to the public, which will help to cover the costs. However, we clearly do have more than enough in the bank to cover these plans while retaining a very healthy bank balance for future years.

Andy Chapman, NAS Secretary, Editor and Treasurer (1 Nov 2020, revised 8 Jan 2021)



Northamptonshire Archaeological Society



Honorary President: His Royal Highness, The Duke of Gloucester, GCVO

Registered Charity No. 268516

Website: www.northants-archaeology.org.uk

Accounts for financial year ending 29 August 2020

Accounts 2018-2019		Accounts 2019-2020	
Income		Income	
Members/Inst's subs (plus sales)	£1,367.00	Members subs (plus sales)	£1,080.56
Institutional (by BACs)	£286.00	Institutional members	£641.00
PLS payments	£119.93	PLS copyright licencing payments	£362.01
		Publication grants (MOLA/Cotswold/Oxford)	£4,736.00
Income	£1772.93	Income	£6,819.57
MHBS interest	£121.95	MHBS Building Society Interest	£124.04
Expenditure		Expenditure	
BALH	£75.00	Journal 40 publication costs	£4,463.31
NNHS room hire	£60.00	Journal 40 p&p costs	£571.83
AGM lecture fee	£20.00	Grant payment (MidNAG)	£250.00
Northants Heritage Form	£35.00	BALH (includes insurance)	£75.00
Arch of Northants to ADS	£648.60	NNHS (room hire)	£60.00
p&p and misc expenses	£53.22	Northants Heritage Forum	£40.00
NCC Record Office tour	£110.00	CBA membership	£76.50
CBA membership	£64.00	p&p and misc. expenses	£53.78
Collyweston Hist Soc grant	£250.00		
Total expenditure	£1,315.82	Total expenditure	£5,590.42
Balance of Accounts 31/08/2019		Balance of Accounts 29/08/2020	
HSBC Bank account	£8,328.20	HSBC bank account	£9,437.35
MH Building Society	£24,521.18	Market Harborough Building Society	£25,174.24
Nationwide account	£408.83	(Nationwide closed monies to MHBS)	
Balance 2018-2019	£33,258.21	Balance 2019-2020	£34,611.59

Andy Chapman, NAS Hon. Treasurer, 24 September 2020