THA Secretary’s Report

The 2017 AGM was held in College on Saturday 23rd September. As has become the custom the meeting was preceded by brief presentations from a THA Volunteer Award recipients on their experience and a really well received question and answer session. At the AGM Colin Hayes (1962) retired as President; Roger McKinlay (1979) was elected unanimously to succeed him. We said farewell to Dr Emma Bailey (2009) who sadly was forced to retire due to professional commitments. Dr Emily Floeck (2007) and Ms Anne Wolff (1979) were appointed to the Committee to fill the vacancies that had arisen.

The AGM was immediately followed by the Cambridge Dinner, an event well up to the standard that we have come to expect – wonderful food, great wines, superb service and excellent company – and then drinks in the Aula bar.

The 2017 autumn event on Saturday 11 November, hosted by Philip Sidney (2009), saw us at Penshurst Place, his ancestral home. We gathered for drinks around a roaring fire in the splendid medieval Barons Court and were treated to a hugely entertaining historical account of Penshurst by Philip before retreating to the slightly more intimate Sunderland Room for a four-course dinner.

On Saturday 10 March we made a return trip to the Mary Rose Museum in Portsmouth. Since our last visit the process of drying out the Mary Rose had been completed and the previous wall separating the ship from the remainder of the museum had been replaced by glass to provide a stunning view of the surviving part of the vessel. We were able to spend time wandering through this absolutely fascinating museum, drinks in hand, with input from numerous volunteer guides and from our host, Chris Dobbs (1976), who had been a diver and archeologist on the original exploration and recovery and subsequently responsible for the interpretation in the museum. After a splendid dinner we were treated to a talk and presentation by Chris. Yet another hugely enjoyable event.

On Monday 25 June we made another return trip, this time to the Long Room at Lord’s Cricket Ground for a drinks reception, rounding off a trio of events in superb venues. The number of people attending the event at the Long Room was below our expectations and the Committee are considering whether to revert to holding a London Event on alternate years.

Looking ahead, on Saturday 17 November we will be at the award-winning Hepworth Gallery in Wakefield for a drinks reception, tours of the Gallery and dinner. The Committee are now hard at work planning events for 2019 and 2020 – remember that we are always open to suggestions for venues for future events.
As always we are deeply indebted to the support that we receive from the staff of the Alumni and Development Office throughout the year, without them we would find it very difficult to function. It has also been a great delight to welcome the Master to every one of our events during the course of the year as part of that enduring link between all of us and the Hall.