



108th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 23rd September 2023

Held in the Trinity Hall Lecture Theatre and online, at 6:00 pm

MINUTES

In the Chair: Mrs Gillian Karran-Cumberlege, President

The meeting opened with a brief statement by Jonathan Cornwell, explaining the THA Awards, granted to Trinity Hall students (by an application process) for humanitarian activities of their choice.

Charlize (Charlie) Boul gave a 10-minute presentation on her recent trip to Guatemala, supported by a THA Award, when she volunteered with the Foundation for the Higher Good. She reported on teaching English language classes, helping build houses and taking supplies to families in remote jungle communities. She spoke of the people helped by the Foundation as ‘the most generous, joyful and grateful people’, saying she was humbled by their appreciation. She closed with a heartfelt ‘Thank you’ for the Award.

Charlie’s and other volunteer reports will be available on the THA section of the College website.

1. Attendance/Apologies

Some 20 members were present in person, plus 3 online, with apologies from Committee Members, Roy Warden and Ramandeep Singh, and Committee Member Elect, Brian Healy.

2. Previous Minutes

The minutes of the 107th AGM held on 24th September 2022 had been made available in advance on the relevant section of the College website. Matters arising were covered in the agenda. The President invited approval of the minutes: 1 member had asked for minor corrections which had been noted and the amendments made.

The minutes were therefore approved and were duly signed by the President.

3. Election of President

The re-election of Gillian Karran-Cumberlege (1982) as President was proposed by Sarah Webbe, seconded by Chris Angus, and carried by a majority vote.

4. Committee Members

The President noted the retirement of Roy Warden as Financial Officer and David Billett as Secretary. She thanked them for their loyal commitment to the THA and their years of service in these roles.

Lizzie Iron (1977) stood for election as THA Secretary, and briefly introduced herself with credentials for the role. Her election was proposed by Cortland Fransella, seconded by Chris Angus, and unanimously approved by the members present.

Emily Bosley (2012) stood for election as Financial Officer, introducing herself with her credentials for the role. Her election was proposed by Roger McKinlay, seconded by Chris Angus, and unanimously approved by the members present.

David Billett (1968) stood for re-election as a member of the Committee, proposed by Emily Bosley, and seconded by Chris Angus. With 1 vote against, his election was carried by a majority of the members present.

Ramandeep Singh (2010) had been co-opted to the Committee during the year and was formally elected, proposed by Lee Evans, seconded by David Billett and approved.

Guy Brannan (1974) stood for election as a new Committee member and introduced himself describing his legal background and role as a judge. His election was proposed by Cortland Fransella, seconded by Sarah Webbe, and unanimously approved by the members present.

Dr Brian Healy (1998) stood for election as a new Committee member and as he was not present, a brief profile of his background in mathematics was read by the President. His election was proposed by Sarah Webbe, seconded by Johnny Cornwell, and unanimously approved by the members present.

5. Revision of Rules of the Association Item 14:

To revise: The Association's cheques shall be signed by any two of three nominated signatories, of whom at least one shall be an officer of the Committee.

To be replaced with: *All expenditure has to be properly authorised and large amounts need approval by two members of the Committee.*

The Secretary explained that making payments by cheque is very time-consuming and inconvenient and had caused particular frustration when making payments for this year's THA Awards. Modern banking procedures are much more efficient with online transfer facilities and it is timely for the THA to update its payment procedures. The proposed wording is broader than the existing version and it covers approval of all expenditure.

The Financial Officer explained that the Committee had considered the terms ‘properly’ and ‘large’ and had agreed a threshold of up to £200 authorised for single payments by the Financial Officer, with a full audit trail for *all* expenditure. Any amounts above £200 to be approved by the Committee at appropriate meetings.

This Revision to the Rules was proposed by Chris Angus, seconded by Guy Brannan and unanimously approved by the members present.

6. Secretary’s Report

The Secretary, David Billett, referred members to his written report, available in the AGM leaflet and on the relevant section of the College website. He summarised the main points:

- Meetings and events had settled after the disruption of the pandemic.
- Criteria for the THA Awards had been overhauled to make them more flexible, resulting in an encouraging set of applications for 2023.
- Litigation had continued and had been handled appropriately by the Committee, along with the resulting financial implications.
- Two regional dinners had been held and enjoyed in interesting venues, with representation from 6-7 decades of matriculation years, and including a good turn-out from local alumni – demonstrating the value of regional events.
 - 32 guests had attended the Leeds dinner at the Royal Armouries Museum.
 - 47 guests had attended the Bristol dinner at the Merchants’ Hall in Clifton.
- David mentioned that he was to retire from the role of THA Secretary, handing over to Lizzie Iron at this AGM.
- The responsibility for organising events had been separated from the Secretary’s duties and would be managed by a new team within the Committee, who planned to diversify the programme.
- David closed with words of acknowledgement and appreciation for the commitment and support of the two Presidents covering his period of office, as well as the Development Office and the Bursar’s Office; and also the pleasure of engaging with the Master, Fellows, Staff and Students of the College.

7. Financial Report

In the absence of the outgoing Financial Officer, the incoming Financial Officer gave a brief report, summarising the financial position as follows:

- **Timing of THA accounts:** we awaited the auditing of College Accounts in November, to ensure that the THA Accounts were accurately presented, depending on any implications arising from the College Accounts.
 - It was noted that the THA rules do not require the accounts to be brought to the AGM, but the Committee had considered whether to review the date of the AGM to align with presentation of the accounts; it was concluded that the advantages of the September date outweighed the disadvantages (in terms of

attracting attendance for the AGM and dinner and timetabling such an event alongside other College commitments).

- The THA Committee had adopted the THA's 2021-22 Accounts on 15th November 2022, once the College accounts had been approved. The THA Accounts had then been published on the Trinity Hall website for members to consider. [THA Rules and AGMs - Trinity Hall \(cam.ac.uk\)](https://www.cam.ac.uk/tha-rules-and-agms)
- The same approach would be adopted this year with the Committee approving the 2022-23 THA Accounts later in 2023 and ensuring that they would be available on the Trinity Hall website from that time.
- The accounts showed a net deficit, as a result of the litigation costs.
- Other expenditure included the THA Awards and the year's Events, including 2 regional dinners and 2 drinks receptions for MA dinners, which are traditionally funded by the THA.
- The value of the endowment and the interest income were now increasing again. Emily stressed that the Association has no access to the capital sum and can *only* make use of the interest income to further its aims.

8. AOB

The President extended warm thanks to the Fellows and Alumni who had contributed earlier to the fascinating afternoon panel discussion '**AI: Unravelling Potential**'.

Questions: a number of questions had been submitted in advance and the President read out the questions and responses. See appendix to the Minutes for the full text.

Colin Hayes asked members to remember **Bob Ely**, who had passed away in January 2023. Bob had been a loyal supporter of the College and the THA for many years. An obituary is available on the College website at: [Bob Ely: 1930-2023 - Trinity Hall \(cam.ac.uk\)](https://www.cam.ac.uk/bob-ely-1930-2023)

The new Secretary mentioned that a suggestion had been made to her that members who have died in the year could be remembered at each AGM. The College already notes deaths of alumni and at its next meeting, the Committee will consider the value of further acknowledgement by the THA.

A member asked if the Association could disburse more funds for the Awards, using money from the endowment. The President repeated the point that the Association has neither authority nor permission to spend from the capital sum.

The Committee noted and welcomed a comment from a member visiting from overseas who suggested it would be good to connect more with international THA groups.

The President thanked all the members for their attendance and the meeting closed at 18.45.

Appendix: Questions and Answers

1. Minor corrections to the minutes of the 2022 AGM had been received, which had been noted and implemented.
2. It was questioned why the most up to date accounts were not being presented to the AGM. The President explained that the 2022-23 accounts would be shown on the website when they were published, following the adoption of the College's audited accounts later in the year. The endowment value would be shown then.
3. A question was raised regarding the facility for Alumni to apply for funds for their own gatherings. The President replied that the THA Committee had done this on occasion in the past and was constantly considering the best way to connect Alumni and achieve the THA's aims, given the resources available.
4. A question was raised as to how overseas Alumni benefit from the endowment. It was explained that overseas Alumni are served by the College and the Development Office and also have full access to online activities provided by the THA.
5. A query was made about the timing of the ring-fence around the endowment. It was explained that the endowment has always been ring-fenced. Income and capital are recorded in the THA Annual Accounts.
6. A query was also made about the proposed revision to the rules. The response was given that much had changed since the introduction of the rules. The new rule is explicit that all expenditure is properly authorised. The move to online banking was necessary, in particular to support THA Awardees.