

**Durham University Retired Staff Association  
Annual General Meeting  
21 June 2016**

**Present:** The Chairman of DURSA, Dr KJ Orford, in the chair, Professor JH Anstee, Mrs S Brooks, Professor DT Clark, Dr MP Collins, Dr PDB Collins, Dr AI Doyle, Mrs K Fall, Dr FD Gault, Dr H Gault, Professor PDA Harvey, Dr AJ Heesom, Dr WTW Morgan, Dr IM Stewart, Dr WR Telford, Dr RB Thomas, Professor AR Townsend, Dr JG Townsend, Dr JM Tudor, Professor A Unsworth and Sir Arnold Wolfendale.

In addition to the members of DURSA there were present as observers Mrs Angela Anstee, Mrs Jill Heesom, Mrs Jean Orford, Mrs Pamela Stewart, Dr Andrena Telford, Mrs J Unsworth, Mr D Williams, Mr Bruno Van Dyk and Lady Wolfendale.

The above were later joined for dinner by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Corbridge, and Professor BH Bransden.

## **Minutes**

### **23 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Dr B Best, Miss JM Kenworthy, Miss M McCollum, Professor JA Moss (who sent her good wishes to all present and reported that she was happily settling into her new home in London), Mrs N Parker, Mr FJ Pritchard, Professor PJ Rhodes and Dr S Taylor.

### **24 Minutes**

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 16 June 2015 were approved.

### **25 Annual Report**

**a) Received:** the Annual report as set out below:

#### **1. Acknowledgement**

The Committee wishes to record its gratitude for all the help received from the staff of DARO and in particular from Charlotte Kerr for handling the Association's records and bookings and for distributing news and circulars to members.

#### **2. The Committee**

The Committee has continued to meet regularly and believes that a successful pattern of activities has been established. The lack of progress in fund raising for the Orientation and Transition Workshop, despite the enthusiasm expressed at the 2015 AGM, is much regretted.

#### **3 Membership**

The much-awaited circulation to members of the University's own pension

scheme last summer has led to a welcome increase in numbers and a membership more representative of the retired staff. Approximately 26 % of the overall membership of 414 are members of the University pension scheme.

#### **4 Accounts**

The problems in preparing accounts have now been resolved.

#### **5 Events During the Year**

A number of events have been held during the year which those attending have found interesting and informative. All the hosts have been very welcoming and have gone to a great deal of trouble on DURSA's behalf for which we are most grateful. Details of attendance are as follows:

Visit to the School of Engineering and Computing Science on 11 November 2015 - 30

Visit to New College, Durham, tour and lunch on 17 November 2015 - 22

Pre-Christmas Reception and Get-Together on 8 December 2015 - 23

Visit to the Geography department on 3 February 2016 - 28

Visit to the Oriental Museum on 9 March 2016 - 31

Visit to St Laurence Church, Pitlington (39), followed by lunch at the Hallgarth Manor Hotel (34) on 11 May 2016

The Annual dinner on 21 June 2016 and the Antiques event on 7 July complete the programme.

#### **6 Meetings with the Vice-Chancellor**

The Committee has been grateful for the opportunity to meet the Vice-chancellor on two occasions. A report on the second meeting was circulated to members on 18 March 2016.

#### **7 Circular to the Membership**

In a rather small response to a circular to the membership seeking information on what sort of events interested them, the following suggestions were received:

Coach trips to stately homes or an arboretum

Visit to Nissan - 4 people

Voluntary subscriptions

Drop-in arrangements for coffee and chat or lunch days

Briefing from Senior Management on University Strategy

Provision of student accommodation and relationship with people of Durham

Another visit to NetPark

Visit to Beamish

Visit to Proctor and Gamble

Spring Visit to Botanic Garden

Proper Afternoon Tea in the summer.

Social events - meals, parties

Visits to Higher Education institutions in the area formerly associated with Durham - Newcastle University, Sunderland University, Teesside University.

Suggestions received at a later date suggest a visit specifically to IBRU, Nissan and Smiths, Washington with emphasis on battery powered electric vehicles and the Physics or Wynyard night-time Observatories.

(The Committee had already tried to arrange a visit to Nissan but unfortunately the company was not allowing tours at present. A drop-in arrangement for coffee on the first Tuesday in the month had been arranged on a trial basis and a number of other proposals were under consideration. The Committee was reluctant to become involved in arranging coach trips at this stage. Further consultation was in hand on the format of the AGM and whether it should coincide with the Annual Dinner - see Minute 28 below)

### **8 Members without Personal Access to Email**

Despite the principle of ensuring that contacts with members should be by email, a formal arrangement has been instituted to ensure that the few members without such access receive the Association's circulations by post.

### **9 Future Events**

Events already arranged for 2016-17 include visits to Biological and Earth Sciences, to Thorn Electric, to the Botanic Garden, the Library and to Croxdale Hall.

- b) In introducing the Annual Report, the Chairman reported that the external advice received was that the Orientation and Transition Workshop was likely to be regarded outside the University as a core University responsibility and therefore unlikely to attract donors. The Committee was now looking into another possibility. He hoped that termly meetings with the Vice-Chancellor would continue. Special thanks were due to Mrs Fall for all her efforts in making the visit to St Laurence's Church and the Hallgarth Hotel at Pitlington such a success. He expressed concern that the Antiques Event on 7 July might have to be cancelled and urged members to make every effort to increase numbers registering from the current twenty to at least forty. He expected the drop-in for coffee arrangement at the Palatine Centre to continue. In addition to the 2016-17 events mentioned in the Report there was to be an afternoon tea and tour of the Castle and the visit to Croxdale Hall would be preceded by a buffet lunch at the Honest Lawyer.

### **26 Accounts**

**a) Received:** the Association's accounts for 2015-16 as at 31 May 2016.

**b) Noted:** that previous difficulties in tracing payments received had led to the Association starting with a clean sheet from 1 September 2015 and that, in consequence, the accounts were for the period starting 1 September 2015 and ending 31 May 2016. As such the accounts contained income for the Annual Dinner

and Antiques Event but did not yet show the expected expenditure on them. Following these payments it was anticipated that the Association would be left with a small balance to carry forward.

## **27 Membership of the Committee**

### **a) Reported:**

- i) That the retiring members of the Committee, all eligible to stand again, were: Professor JH Anstee, Dr KJ Orford (Chairman), Miss MS McCollum
- ii) That nominations for membership of the Committee had been invited by email by 14 June or alternatively to be made at the meeting.
- iii) That, whilst he was willing to stand for the Committee again, Dr Orford felt that the time had come for him to stand down as Chairman.

### **b) Resolved:**

That, in the absence of other nominations,

- i) Dr AJ Heesom, having been nominated and seconded, be elected Chairman with effect from 1 July 2016.
- ii) The following, who had been duly proposed and seconded be declared elected to serve for three years from 1 July 2016:  
Professor JH Anstee  
Dr KJ Orford  
Miss MS McCollum

(Later in the evening Dr Orford was thanked for his efforts in founding DURSA and for leading its successful establishment)

## **28 Future Activities and Arrangements for the Annual general Meeting and the Annual Dinner**

### **a) Reported:**

- i) That it had been suggested that the cost of the Annual Dinner (£39.50 a head) acted as a deterrent to many members and discouraged them from attending the AGM when held in conjunction with it. Separating the Annual Dinner and the AGM and combining the latter with a light and less costly lunch, or with an afternoon tea or with a get-together and drinks on the lines of the one held in December, might be more attractive to some members without deterring others. It would also mean that the Annual Dinner need not be held in June when there could be problems in avoiding clashes with University functions. It was clear at last year's AGM that there had been strong feeling in favour of holding an Annual Dinner.

ii) That nothing had been received from members in response to the request for comments on the above.

**b) Noted:** That the suggested separation of AGM from Annual Dinner widened the possible choice of venues, and,

**c) Agreed:** to adopt the suggestion and to fix dates in the light of available venues.