

# VETERINARY HISTORY SOCIETY

## Minutes of the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

RCVS, Belgravia House, London SW1P 2AF

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at 2.45pm

**Members present:** Edward Boden, Robin Bone, Carl Boyde, Gary Clayton Jones, John Clewlow, Norman Comben, Tim Cox, Fiona Dalzell, Roger Ewbank, Vernon Harris, Mike Hinton, Frances Houston, David Jackson, Bruce Jones, Dick Lane, Jean Mann, John McCaig, Peter Scott and Abigail Woods.

**Apologies for absence:** Tony Andrews, John Broberg, Sherwin Hall, Peter Jackson, Alan Laursen-Jones, Norman Leslie, Robert Mares, John Moffitt, David North and John Watkins.

**Minutes of the previous meeting** on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008 had been circulated and were agreed. There were no matters arising.

**Treasurer's Report:** the accounts for 11 months until 30.09.09 were circulated. Their adoption was proposed by Bruce Jones and seconded by Dick Lane and was agreed.

**Membership Secretary's Report:** individual membership is now c 120 and 52 libraries subscribe – this is a small but relevant increase.

**Editor's Report:** two issues each year are regularly being completed and sent to all members, and the journal is now printed digitally so that colour can be used. Full-length articles as well as shorter fillers are always needed.

**Chairman's Report:** the Society had a good year and membership had increased. The programmes both at the Biddulph meeting with its Darwinian theme and today have been excellent; the RCVS is a good venue for us. The journal continues to contain a good mix of high quality items; the newsletter is sent to members between the journal mailings. The website has been improved, but needs more contents – it brings many enquiries. And the Society has had publicity in *The Veterinary Record* and *Veterinary Times* through letters and press releases. Three projects have been introduced: veterinary archives country-wide must be listed and collected in a central register, the basis of conservation which should be one of this Society's main aims; a meeting of librarians and archivists from most of the veterinary colleges has been set up in January. Secondly the RCVS has asked the Society to identify, provide provenance and catalogue their archives. Thirdly a publishing project has been set up, under the Chairman's auspices, the Society will produce a series of short monographs; two texts are in hand: a diary of an RVC student in the 1860s, and a selection of 20<sup>th</sup> century veterinary lives. A collection of personal experiences of early graduate days and subsequent progress could make up another title - please ask for these at any veterinary meeting or re-union. Meetings arranged for next year are in Utrecht in the spring, Newmarket in early summer and the RCVS in November. We look forward to another good year.

The Chairman is now standing down, having completed five years in the Chair. He thanked his officers and committee and all who had added to his enjoyment of the Chairmanship of the Society.

John Clewlow expressed the Society's thanks to Bruce Jones, who has contributed greatly to the Society's present good health. With his detailed knowledge and infectious enthusiasm he has spoken on many subjects and repeatedly written for *Veterinary History*; meetings have been interesting and varied, and he has now initiated both the publishing project and the categorisation of veterinary archival material. We are pleased he will continue to advise and support the committee.

**Any other business:**

1) Norman Comben notified the meeting of the RVC's expansion plans at Hawkshead. The new extension will result in the abolition of the museum's display area in the Eclipse Building, which will be replaced by displays in the new entrance hall. Both this Society and the 1953 London graduates have given what to them were large donations to the museum. It was agreed that the Chairman should write to Prof McKellar at the RVC expressing the Society's displeasure at the downgrading of the museum, and asking how the show-cases which the Society had previously donated were going to be used.

2) A recent letter in *The Veterinary Record* had asked if any veterinarian had recollections of the battle of the Somme; there were no suggestions.

3) Volunteers were asked for to fulfil a request from Maggie Shilcock of King's Lynn to speak to a group on veterinary history.

4) Norman Comben advertised and recommended *The Farriers of London 1270-1674*, now published by the Worshipful Company of Farriers, £18.

5) Gary Clayton Jones recommended and promised the publication of the late Prof Vaughan's history of Hawkshead next year.

6) The Society's web-site should be added to its headed paper.

**Election of Officers:** Chairman – Tim Cox was proposed by Norman Comben and seconded by Bruce Jones and was elected. Bruce V Jones becomes the Senior Vice Chairman. Other Officers: Secretary – Jean Mann, Treasurer and Membership Secretary – Robin Bone, and Editor – John Clewlow: proposed together by Bruce Jones, seconded by Carl Boyde and elected.

**Election of Committee:** Tony Andrews, John Broberg, Norman Comben and Abigail Woods – together proposed by John Clewlow, seconded by Gary Clayton Jones and elected.

Tim Cox thanked the meeting's vote of confidence in him as future Chairman, a position which he will enjoy. Although he is neither a veterinarian nor a historian (but has been in marketing and advertising) he has created a library of 13,000 items (where researchers are welcome) related to the thoroughbred horse, a significant collection which will eventually become part of the proposed new National Horse Racing Museum in Newmarket. He also has links to the British Sporting Art Trust, with which the Society has already had a meeting at Hawkshead.

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm.