

ROYAL GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF CORNWALL 1814-2019
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 15th February 2020, 2.00 pm,
The Alverne Room, St John's Hall, Penzance
The President, Dr Chris Page BSc, PhD, F.L.S., took the chair.

1. **Brief Health & Safety Statement:** by Loveday Jenkin (LJ).

2. **President's Welcome:** everyone was welcomed to the meeting by the president, both new and old members. Everyone present was requested to sign the attendance register.

Present: Beatrice Kerno Plummer (BKP), Loveday Jenkin, June Markham, Adrian Spalding, David Holt, Delia Holt, Melissa Hardie, Frances Wall, Hilary Mitchell, Sid Geake, Claire Page, Chris Page (CP), Dawn Walker, Frank Howie, Marion Smith, Charles Sweeney, Alexandra Sweeney, Keith Lindon, Linda Beskeen, Nick Farrell, Dinah DiMaio, Guiseppe DiMaio.

2a. Members Stood in Remembrance of Roger Holmes and David Freeman

Roger Holmes was a past president and long standing member of the committee. He had been a great researcher and mine of information, dealing with many of the research queries that have come to the Society in recent years.

David Freeman was the curator of the mineral collection and had spent many years collating and digitalising the catalogue. He was also a long standing and active member of the Society.

President welcoming comments – The president also expressed sympathy and concern for Neil Plummer who remains in rehabilitation and offered deep thanks for the help of Beatrice Kerno Plummer who has done so much this year. The other helpers who made it possible to manage this year were also thanked.

3. **Apologies:** Adrian Roberts, Wesley Allen, Jackie Caklais, Jean Taylor, Rachel Rohr, Ian Andrew Rohr, Karen Harrowing, Tom Hawken, John Taylor, Kim Lewis for John Grimes, Mike Smith, Tamsin Page, Courtney Smale, Colin Bristow, June Coles, Beth Beare, Rosemary, Miriam & Horace Stone. Apologies were received from local schools who have become new members & invited to the AGM. The poor weather accounted for a low attendance.

4. **Receipt of the minutes of the last AGM, 2019:** (previously circulated & available at the meeting). Acceptance was proposed by Loveday Jenkin seconded by Chris Page, supported by all and signed.

5. **Matters Arising:**

5.1 **The Old Fire Station, St John's Hall:** LJ reported on the Old Fire Station Building which has been dedicated for the use of the RGSC members. She has been overseeing the transfer and associated administration. Work has been done to prevent leaks, some painting remains to be done in the kitchenette. Trustees met with the solicitors & are almost ready to sign the lease. Delay was caused by the leak, which has now been fixed. Cornwall Council has been slow to respond to the building issues. Currently there is a missing duplicate key. When the duplicate is found, members will be able to access the building via the key box. Volunteer curator Karen Bell is going through the archives - she was at the RIC who have laid off most staff, so is between jobs. She might move out of Cornwall, but has been working on a voluntary basis. The building should be able to house all papers and books, but is not large enough for all of the RGSC furniture to be housed here. The search continues for original old paperwork for the oldest transactions - early 1800s – which is not with the other documents in Penzance. A check is needed to see whether these are at Kresen Kernow or in Truro (Courtney Library)? The Room is for members to come & research. Frances Wall- commented that she has seen the collection at BGS - some are on display, all labelled with RGSC membership &

Mike Howe at BGS is happy to collaborate with any visitors from Cornwall. It looks as if the minerals are not there, BGS think they are in Cornwall. We do not know & need to check where they are. A card index of the whole collection is in The Old Fire Station, which could be cross-referenced with the BGS collection.

Chris Page (CP) – commented that we can be grateful that the heritage is in dry and good condition; we have an ambition to get some of the collection back and on display in Cornwall, probably on a rotating basis, which is fine with the BGS. David Freeman has card indexed the whole collection and was in the process of digitalising this when he died. LJ has heard that we have been offered access to the computer, but not yet had contact and confirmation; this is to be followed up, David Freeman's son & daughter in law being the main contacts.

CP thought that David Freeman was considering long term placing the record in one of the transactions. Mike Howe at BGS, Notts is the contact - perhaps we can get cooperation with him to transfer information on this.

ACTION: LJ will look for grant funding to help get the project digitalised.

CP expressed concern that all of the archive is in one place & we might benefit from getting a copy. Comment from the floor: Bob Sykes did a report on the condition of the collection - Frank Howie has a copy and can give us a copy of that.

ACTION - TBC: It was agreed that we place this information on computer.

Comment from the floor: a member has seen a splendid mineral collection on display in Cambridge, which was said to have been from the RGSC.

Discussion ensued on collections in Cornwall: some are possibly at the RIC; work needs to be done to collate a list of all collections in Cornwall and clarify their source.

New Business

6. Hon. Secretary's Report: BKP read through her report (see attached paper). She reinforced the amount of communication that she has received as secretary regarding enquiries about both Geology in Cornwall and the early historical records of the Society.

Morrab Garden stable project: Melissa Hardie gave an update on this Hypatia Society project : quiet progress continues. The aim is to create an environmental centre with a reading room, plant registry, botanical research centre with wider plant associated learning to be held here. £85k has been raised toward match funding for a lined up £150k of EU grant funds, which are not now confirmed. HLF would match fund if the EU funds are granted, but the EU situation is uncertain, so invited the project to re-apply (now in process). Proposal concerns: further planning & clarification. Questions include: who were the partners, who would be in charge, what management programme would be in place? A number of potential partners include the National Trust, Morrab Library, Morrab Gardens Trust, Cornwall Council (link with Tamsin Daniel, Heritage Services Manager), and are now asking RGSC to be on the board. Some advantages for RGSC might be administration support and an address. The organisation is not yet constituted. Frank Howie volunteered to be the link (agreed). Meetings take place weekly. Congratulations were offered to Melissa Hardie on her new book - story of the maternal line of the Bronte sister and links to Cornwall.

7. Hon. Treasurer's report & annual accounts: (BKP)see attached paper for details. The closing statement for the year to end of March 2019 was £26,049.40p, a surplus of £595.14p over the previous year.

8 Brief update statement of accounts : Updated figures to Jan 2020 show a total of £27,225.47p in the current account.

9. Hon. President's Report: (CP) see attached report. CP wished to focus on looking forward as well as reflecting on the past year. We have had a thorough account of the past year and for a small organisation we have been able to invite a wide range of speakers and hold regular, well attended meetings. CP offered his resignation on grounds of ill health.

Four ideas the president wished to sow:

- a) Aspiration to see the society survive by diversifying eg in future lectures looking into global perspectives, addressing global issues, esp evolving environments, particularly climate.
- b) Broaden our appeal to younger people & bring them on to Council and in the audience.
- c) Reach out. eg CP presented a paper to Parliament on trees & plants for mine sites
- d) Develop display abilities, eg portable displays & combine with other organisations in Cornwall to build strength, eg Goonhilly & other possible areas, eg spaceport.

The Bolitho Gold Medal was presented to Neil Plummer by the President and accepted by Beatrice Kerno on his behalf. This is awarded in recognition of the huge dedication, time and effort given by Neil over many years, and the past ten years in particular, LJ - proposed a vote of thanks for his being such a steady hand and for his great contribution to the well being of the Society.

10. Election of Officers:

Outgoing President - CP to stay as ex-officio member of the committee

Members of the committee agreed – Linda Beskeen, Loveday Jenkin, Adrian Spalding, Beatrice Kerno, Caradoc Peters, Hilary Mitchell.

President: Frances Wall was proposed by LJ, seconded by AS, supported unanimously. Prof. Frances Wall agreed to stand as president & stated her wish to see a good and active Geological Society in Cornwall; the programme is very active, she wishes us to consider a move to larger venues, eg Camborne School of Mines (CSM). Field trips and other activities are able to be supported by staff and connections at CSM and facilities are available there. She can offer connections, ideas, experience of governance.

Social Media: Melissa Hardie commented on the need for a committee member to be responsible for social media. This is a historic meeting when we have elected for the first time a woman as president of the RGSC. Proposed a photograph and notice should be sent to the West Briton. *CU*.

Vice President: FW is president of Cornish engineers until April. so will be able to do more after then. FW Suggested co-opting a Vice President - LJ agreed to stand - proposed JM seconded SG *CU*.

Trustees - Nick Farrel agreed to be a trustee and was proposed for the post of treasurer by BKP, seconded by LJ, *CU*. AS an unincorporated charity there is some liability to the person of trustee. Roger Holmes was a trustee until his death, June Markham and Adrian Spalding wished to resign from trusteeship. It was agreed to add LB & NF as trustees, leaving Neil Plummer, Beatrice Kerno Plummer, Loveay Jenkin, Nick Farrell, Linda Beskeen as trustees. Frances Wall has looked into details of this on Charity Commission guidance and will look further to check the trustees situation in regard to control of a building

Secretary: Linda Beskeen - with Melissa Hardie as Correspondence Secretary.

Membership Secretary : BKP to continue in post.

Programme: to be a joint responsibility of the Secretary and other Committee Members.

Bank signatories: existing signatories are Beatrice Kerno Plummer, Neil Plummer, Loveday Jenkin.

To add: Frances Wall, Nick Farrell, Linda Beskeen.

11. **AOB:** none notified or raised.

12. **Council recommendation of the next AGM:** 20th Feb 2021

13. **Closure of the AGM:** The meeting closed at 4.00pm

14. **AGM Annual Address: “Could Early Plants have bioengineered the planet, transforming from a Greenhouse to an Icehouse World?” By Professor Dianne Edwards MA, PhD, ScD(Cantab) CBE FRS FRSE FLS FLS**, Research Professor at the School of Earth and Oceanic Sciences at Cardiff University.

15. **Departure** for the Queens Hotel, Promenade, Penzance at 5.50pm