



Minutes of 61st Annual General Meeting

Held on Friday 22nd September 2023 at Telford Hotel

Present:

Chairman	-	Robert M^cLeod
Hon Secretary	-	Matthew Myles
Hon Treasurer	-	Paul LePinnet
Plus 21	-	Society Members & Guests

The Chairman Robert M^cLeod welcomed the members to the 61st AGM of the BSSG. The Chairman started proceedings by asking the members present to observe a minute's silence for Tom Young MBE who had passed away since the last AGM. The Secretary reminded the delegates that voting is reserved for members only but that all suggestions from the floor would be welcomed.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENSE.

Paula Craib Scottish section, Steve Moher North East section, Abigail Mortimer North East section, Phil Jones Western section, John Preston East Anglia section. John Liddle Scottish Section.

2. MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There were no questions from the floor.

Proposed by: Ian Pearson Scottish section.

Seconded by: Bee Hardy North East section.

3. MATTERS ARISING

None.

4. CHAIRMANS REPORT

Chairman's Report

Council had hoped for a better attendance at this Symposium but unfortunately this is the reality of where our Society is currently. Over the last few years, like many other Societies and clubs we have seen membership drop. Only the corporate members from the glassblowing school in Paris make our numbers look respectable. Major employers of scientific glassblowers like I.C.I have disappeared, and Universities have changed strategy with regards to glassblowing, all of which has impacted on the BSSG. The fact that the Society is still in existence is down to the efforts of my fellow officers Matthew Myles, Secretary and Paul LePinnet Treasurer, ably assisted by Ian Pearson, journal editor, Dan Jackson, advertising manager and council members Bee Hardy, Abby Mortimer and Ayako Tani. The Society is also grateful for the support from the companies that have advertised in the journal and sponsored the Symposium. I'm sure Ian will mention them in his report.

The main aim of council over the past year has been to ensure the continued existence of BSSG and financial stability. To keep costs to a minimum all recent meetings have taken place by Zoom. As the Journal is the Society's main contact with members it was imperative to ensure the Society had the necessary funds for it to continue. I'm pleased to report we have achieved this and I'm sure the Treasurer's report will give a detailed overview of the BSSG account.

There have been a few positives for the Society, Ian Pearson's dedication to producing the Journal was recognised by the Heritage Craft Association and he was presented with the prestigious Volunteer of the Year Award.

The award was presented by Jay Blades, presenter from the BBC programme the Repair Shop. This was followed up by his production company's getting in touch looking for a glassblower to take part in a new show focusing on the exceptional skills of different crafts around the UK. The show will be presented by Jay along with guest presenter Sir David Jason. I please to say Terri Adams was chosen to take part and filming has been completed and should be released early next year. The BSSG are also planning to take part in another event at the Irvine Maritime Museum aimed at schools. This all helps to promote the profession of scientific glassblowing.

I would like to finish this report by thanking everyone who has supported the BSSG through their membership and attendance at Symposiums.

Robert McLeod

BSSG Chairman.

The Chairman asked that all reports be voted on, on mass at the end to help speed proceedings along.

5. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary's Report to AGM, Telford Hotel 22nd September 2023

As of 15th September 2023

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
<u>Total Members for 2023</u>	69	—	—	—
<u>New Members for 2023</u>	6	23	—	—
<u>Members not renewed for 2023</u>	33	—	—	—
<u>Members by Section with Contact names</u>				
EA East Anglian	16	14	—	—
M Midlands	3	7	—	—
NE North East	6	10	—	—
NW North West	5	5	—	—
O Overseas	16	46	—	—
S Southern	3	3	—	—
Sc Scottish	9	10	—	—
TV Thames Valley	5	9	—	—
W Western	8	5	—	—
	71	109	—	—
<u>Members by type</u>				
Members (Full)	40	40	—	—
Retired Members	16	17	—	—
Honary Life Member	3	3	—	—
Student Members (inc. Corp Students)	5	33	—	—
Corporate Members	7	16	—	—
Associate Members	—	—	—	—
Subscribers	3	3	—	—
	75	112	—	—
<u>Companies with Corporate Membership</u>				
	—	2	—	—
Hampshire (R&D) Glassware Ltd	—	4	—	—
Yorlab	—	4	—	—
Soffieria Sestese	3	3	—	—
Quartz Silica Products Ltd	—	1	—	—
Geol Scientific Glassworks Ltd	—	1	—	—
Radleys	2	2	—	—
Duraglass Sdn Bhd	1	1	—	—
Elementex Ltd	1	—	—	—

Lycee Dorian (Paris School)		27	—	—
<u>Subscribers for the BSSG Journal</u>	3	3	2	—

CNPIEC
The Corning Museum of Glass
University of Waikato Library

As per normal the renewals are painfully slow in being paid, with some only being renewed along with the symposium package. Corporate membership seems to be based on if the company wants their trainees to enter the competitions.

Matthew Myles

Honorary Secretary

6. TREASURES REPORT

Treasurers Report AGM Symposium 2023

February £10,941
March £11,320
April £11,176
May £11.850
June £11.457
July £11,729
August £19,601

As of today, The BSSG has in its Bank account £23384,19 which will enable to cover the cost of the Hotel accommodation of £14,290. plus, VAT and the cost of the Marquee. There will be further costs for late Bookings.

Costs to the Society during 2024 will include Insurance cover for the Library holdings , various Cups and awards and also public liability.

Based upon these figures the Council / Symposium committee made the decision to arrange the 2023 Symposium which had to be made 12 months in advance although the bookings were minimal 2 months prior to the proposed date!

Further expense for the Symposium will be 1) the toast Master 2) Apprentice award and the Journal award for an individual's contribution.

The Council are committed to support the Journal a typical cost of which is Printing £884.00. and Postage Worldwide £274.00

The Journal has enabled the Society to continue in recent years despite our reduction in membership , which has caused a deal of concern.

For example, the North West section lost 15 members when I.C.I. ceased trading and Liverpool University closed its Glassblowing workshops with a further loss of 7 , The society Lost people such as Peter Halliwell , Bert Chapple and Norman Collins, all who were front line members of this Society. The Northwest section currently has 3 members !

I would hate to see Society to go the way of the Australian and New Zealand Society , as all are based upon the free and fair transfer of knowledge for up-and-coming trainees through association with others.

The Council has chosen to conduct their meetings via Zoom rather than travel to a central location thus reducing traveling costs.

I have decided not to incur £600.00 for an accountant report. I will have these figures published in the journal which I feel should then reach a far greater Audience.

Paul Le Pinnet Hon. Treasurer BSSG

The Council

The Hon Treasurer pointed out that due to ill health he is unable to carry on in the role. The Chairman asked the delegates present to show their appreciation with a round of applause for all the work Paul ably supported his wife Michelle have done for the Society over the years.

The Hon Secretary asked if the journal costs were per issue or total, the Hon Treasurer and Chairman clarified that it is per issue so they total cost comes to around £4,500 per year which the membership fees do not come close to covering. The Chairman thanked all the company's for taking out advertisements and sponsorship, without their continued support producing the journal in its current format would not be viable.

7. ELECTION OF AUDITORS

The Chairman voiced his support of the decision not to appoint auditors due to the cost to the society and the lack of communication the Hon Treasurer had received from the current auditors since Covid, the money saved would be used to help run the Society.

8. COUNCIL REPORT.

Council Report to AGM 22nd September 2023

Telford Hotel

Since the Last AGM council has held 5 meetings all on Zoom, the first was to discuss the symposium in Oulton Hall the others were mainly to organise the symposium in Telford Hotel. As is now normal the low numbers of members and the age demographic were also discussed with the future of the journal in its current 4 issue format in jeopardy as costs outstrip the membership fees.

On a brighter note, Council has 2 new regular attendees in Abby Mortimer and Bee Hardy.

Matthew Myles

Honorary Secretary

The Chairman pointed out that Ayako Tani has also agreed to join the council.

9. JOURNAL/ADVERTISING REPORT

BSSG JOURNAL REPORT TO AGM 22/9/23 TELFORD HOTEL.

Ian Pearson – *Journal* Editor

I reported last year about the increasing costs of producing the *Journal* and this continues to be a challenge for the Society. Key to the costs is postage and one reaction to this is for the *Journal* to be based solely on-line. Whilst this would save postage as there will be no hard copies the issue of providing articles to be published remains. Options as alternatives to on-line editions would be to reduce the number of issues per year from four to three. Thus, issues would appear in February, July and November. Information to members could be communicated between these dates using an email system. Whatever decision the fact remains more interaction between members is vital.

The Editorial Board has met and selected this years winner of the Literary Prize.

I wish to thank Alan Gall for his contributions about the history of Pyrex suppliers.

I also wish to thank the *Journal* advertisers, GPE, Jeremy Bolton and Robson Scientific.

Finally, I thank my proof-readers Graham Reed and Alan Gall

Ian once again pointed out that there is a lack of people submitting articles for the Journal, he also mentioned that the Council will be looking to raise the advertising rates as it has been seven or eight years since they were last raised.

10. BOARD OF EXAMINERS REPORT

BOE report to AGM

Telford Hotel

22nd September 2023

Since the last AGM in 2023 there has been one exam.

Ayako Tani from Glasgow University sat the Bench stage 2 exam on the 31st of March 2023, once again it was done remotely with Matthew Myles as the examiner, Ayako passed with credit.

Ayako has expressed an interest in sitting the Certificate of Competence next April/March.

Matthew Myles

BoE Chairman

11. LIBRARIANS REPORT

Librarians Report

The Library has had no new titles added.

There have been no requests for book loans or electronic (DVD) library.

However, I have received a donation of three books with a recommendation from the donor that these titles could be made available perhaps to a worthy student member.

The books are:

Scientific Glassblowing - Wheeler

Scientific Glassblowing for Laboratory Technicians - Barbour

Laboratory Glass-Working - Robertson, Fabian, Cocker & Dewing

We continue to receive free copies of FUSION from the ASGS, for which we are grateful.

12. WEB MASTER'S REPORT

No report

13. SECTION REPORTS

Ian said that the Scottish Sections report would be in Octobers journal.

The Chairman lamented the lack of other active sections.

The reports were proposed and seconded on mass by.

Proposed by: Ian Pearson, Scottish section.

Seconded by: Terri Adams Thames Valley section.

14. ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The Chairman has decided to stay on in the role for one more year due to Paul having to step down he felt that it was unfair to leave the Hon Secretary as the only member still in post unless there was anyone willing to take on the role.

The Hon Secretary is willing to stay on.

Dan Jackson volunteered to take over as Hon Treasurer from Paul.

Proposed by: *Ian Pearson, Scottish section.*

Seconded by: *Terri Adams Thames Valley section.*

Chairman: Mr Robert McLeod, Scottish Section

Hon Treasure: Dan Jackson, Midland section

Hon Secretary: Mr Matthew Myles, East Anglia Section

15. DECLARATION OF APPOINTMENTS

The Following officers were elected to the office for 2019.

Journal Editor:	Ian Pearson, Scottish section
Advertising Manager:	Bee Hardy , North East section
Librarian:	Terri Adams, TV section
Webmaster:	Sean Taylor, Scottish section.

Proposed by: *George Robertshaw, East Anglian section.*

Seconded by: *Gary Coyne, Overseas section.*

16. ANY OTHER BUISNESS

Training Opportunity

Abigail Mortimer North East has been appointed to the UK Institute for Technical Skills and Strategy for a 2 year period and asked council about creating apprenticeships and if the BSSG would be willing to support this.

Robert McLeod Scottish noted that he had had talks with some of the companies attending and that there will be a meeting later about the future of the society, but that he thinks that the society should take every opportunity to try and get assistance with training.

Terri Adams Thames Valley asked about the type of training and the time scale and commitment needed.

Robert McLeod responded that at the present stage Abigail was only looking to council for confirmation that we are interested in participating before she takes it any further and that more information would be forthcoming at a later date.

Membership Fees

Robert again highlighted again that the current membership fees don't come close to covering the cost of the journal and that it's advertisers who help fund the cost, also that the current fees have not been increased in 7 years. We have to try and judge the level between what's affordable to the membership and what the journal costs to produce and post, he opened the question to the floor for suggestions; the councils proposing a £5 increase for all types of member with a £10 increase for overseas if they want a printed copy £5 for online copy.

Ian Pearson Scottish indicated that he was happy with the levels suggested.

Stuart Simcock rep thought that the increase was not enough.

Ian Pearson also wants the advertising rates to be increased.

Robert asked that the suggested rates be accepted and that the advertising rates be looked at by council after consulting the companies that do advertise in the journal. There can be more regular increases in future but a large increase in one go was more likely to result in a decrease in members and lose of advertisers.

Terri Adams Thames Valley asked if there was some way to monetarise the society's videos by putting them online.

Gary Coyne Overseas wonders about where the videos would be stored as some online providers do not store videos long term.

Robert was wary about leaving the society open to legal action if someone injured themselves copying the videos or if there was a lack of safety information provided.

George Robertshaw East Anglia proposed that retired membership could rise to £30 and asked for a show of hands from the member; supported by the members.

Proposed by: Terri Adams, Thames Valley.

Seconded by: Ian Pearson, Scottish.

Future of the Society

Robert invited Klass Roelfsema from Schott to address the AGM in ways that company's that employ scientific glassblowers can help the Society.

Klass and the other company's present had a meeting before the AGM with Robert to discuss how to help promote glassblowing by improve marketing of the symposium, changes to the symposium to make it more attractive to delegates and companies to attend, they have put a group together to look at short- and long-term help to the society.

Robert highlighted that the Society has been trying to get its exams accredited for several years with no success so far.

George Robertshaw; East Anglia Section asked that journals are only sent out to members and not to past members who have not renewed.

Robert replied that all members from the previous year are sent the January journal with a renewal notice included to and that after that they don't receive any more until they have paid the renewal, this is due to the slow uptake of renewals before the end of the year.

A question was asked about the Society's use of social media.

Robert replied that the Society needs to be careful that any material posted online has a disclaimer, but that the Society will continue to explore this avenue.

MINUTES ACCEPTED AS MARKED

DATE.....

SIGNED.....

NAME IN CAPITALS.....

SIGNED.....

NAME IN CAPITALS.....