

**ANNUAL REPORT OF COUNCIL
and
NOTICE OF MEETING**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 206th Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held in accordance with Section V, sub-sections 4 and 5 of the Articles of Association

on **Wednesday 19th March 2008 at 7.00 pm**

in Lecture Theatre K3.25, John Anderson Building, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

The agenda will be as undernoted:

1. Minutes of 205th Annual General Meeting of the Society
2. President's Report
3. Treasurer's Report and recommendations,
and approval of audited accounts for year to 31st July 2007
4. Appointment of independent Accountant
5. Election of Officer-bearers and Council
6. Any other competent business.

Supporting papers are attached.

On behalf of the Council,

Mairi Mitchell
Secretary

**Minutes of the 204th Annual General Meeting, held on Wednesday 21st March 2007
within the John Anderson Building, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow**

The President, John Ramster, presided; some 100 members were present.

1) The Minutes of the 205th Annual General Meeting of the Society were approved.

2) President's Report: Mr Ramster referred to his report which had been circulated beforehand. It had been exhilarating to see so many (275) turning out in the wind and the rain on the night of 13th Dec to attend Prof McGrath's lecture on "The twilight of atheism?" He noted that the renovation of the Kelvin Family stone and the iconic sculpture of Kelvin's Enclosed Gyrostat is going well. £4750 has been raised from a mixture of Industry and Academia and this has meant that the work could be put in hand. The Gyrostat is currently being carved in China under the virtual direction of our sculptor, Tom Allan, who is based in Glasgow. He finished by proposing a vote of thanks to Dick Wolfson, David Ward and Chris Lindsay who are leaving Council after being very active members of it for several years in each case.

The President's report was adopted.

3) Treasurer's Report. a) Mr Borowski gave the report in the absence of the Treasurer. The financial situation is sound in that we made a small but reasonable profit. We now have 635 fully paid up members with 484 paying by standing order. When Mr Borowski first joined some 12 years ago the membership was 108. There was a proposal from the floor that subscriptions could be collected by Direct Debit. It was reported that this had been looked into already and rejected because the setting-up fee was of the order of £2500. It was thought that many members might be reluctant to use the facility also. The "Standing Order" approach was proving to be very efficient. From the floor Dr Forrester suggested that more members should consider not claiming the discounts offered and also that bequests to the society should be made. Mr Ramster thanked him for his intervention and asked that the proposals be submitted to council in writing.

The Treasurer's report was adopted.

b) Mr Borowski then proposed recommendation (b) on the AGM papers, that the full subscription be £25, and £18 for concessions, with discounts of £4 for providing an e-mail address, and £4 for paying by Standing Order. This was carried *nem. con.*

4) Appointment of the Independent Accountant. The President proposed that Mr Lewis Osborne, LIB, CA be retained for the coming year and this was agreed *nem.con.*

5) Election of Office bearers and Council. The President drew attention to the list of nominations that had been drawn up in Recommendation (a). Given that the number of nominations matched the available positions there was no need for any voting to take place and he declared the nominees elected. Consequently the current President, Secretary and Treasurer will remain in office, and Dr Barclay, Dr Brown, Dr Bostock, Mrs Adrienne Foulds, Dr Maas, Dr Suzanne Ullman and Dr Agnes Walker will remain on Council. The President welcomed Dr Helen Cargill Thompson, Mr Leonard Turpie and Mr Alec Mitchell to its ranks.

6) Any other competent business. As there was no other business, the President declared the AGM closed.

After a short interval Professor Anthony Grayling addressed an audience of 320 on the topic of "Defending the Enlightenment".

Mairi Mitchell
Secretary.

Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow

REPORT BY THE COUNCIL 206th Session 2007 – 2008

Office-Bearers:

President: John Ramster

Vice Presidents: Dr Rose Mary Harley
Rev Colin Anderson
Dr Felicity Grainger

Hon Vice-Presidents: Prof Leslie Barr Ephraim Borowski
Neil D S Bell Miss Dorothy Dick
George Gorman John Little
Ian W Pinkerton TD Prof Neil Spurway George A P Wyllie

Secretary : Mrs Mairi Mitchell

Membership Secretary : Ephraim Borowski

Treasurer: Jeffrey Gladstone CA (resigned)
Leonard Turpie

Members of Council: Dr Gordon Barclay Dr Iain Brown
Dr Stephen Bostock Dr Helen Cargill Thompson
Adrienne Foulds Dr Peter Maas
Alec Mitchell Leonard Turpie
Dr Suzanne Ullmann Dr Agnes Walker.

Hon Archivist: Lesley Richmond

Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

During the past session

- The size of the audiences for the lectures has been 240 and greater up to the tenth meeting. This may be a crude measure of the appeal of our Society but it is an important one. For three speakers running in the October - December period we had more than 300 in each case and then, in January, 382 and 375 respectively.
- Given the increased size of the audiences we hired one of the rooms opposite the serving tables as a sitting room, and this has reduced the crowding in the vestibule during the refreshment period. This aspect of our activities is becoming increasingly popular judging by the increased numbers still on site as the packing away begins.
- We stopped the paid advertisements in The Herald before each meeting because it became clear during the year that the main factor bringing people to the lectures is personal recommendation. However we have been looking for a formal comment on the Society in the press for some time and a long, well-researched and thoughtful article entitled "In an age of frivolity and soap, hundreds are getting serious" written by Hugh MacDonald appeared in the Herald of 13 November. It is now on our website.
- Kelvin Day, 17 December, 2007, went off very smoothly with the unveiling of the stone commemorating the centenary of his death by Bailie Catherine MacMaster in the Necropolis followed by a splendid Civic Lunch for our Supporters from Industry and Science that she hosted and ended with a Kelvin Soiree organised by your Council in the Hunterian Museum. Dr Kenneth Skeldon of Glasgow University gave a short eulogy at the Soiree, three research students demonstrated the practical results of some of Lord Kelvin's theorising and the Paragon Ensemble provided a musical tribute. About 170 members and guests were present. The Society was given some very positive publicity in the Press and on radio and television on 17 December focussing mainly on the event in the Necropolis. There is a photograph of the new Kelvin Stone on the website together with a list of the Supporters.
- The Society contributed £ 1500 to the appeal from the University of Glasgow's Special Collections for monies with which to purchase a collection of letters between Lord Kelvin and his brother, James.
- The website is being redesigned and we hope will become not only an improved information resource but also a focal point for interaction between Society members. This follows, in part, from a suggestion by a member that we should try to set up self-running reading groups that would tackle texts that are "classic" in reputation but not easily absorbed when read alone. It is hoped that the activities of such groups – and any others dealing with other subjects of interest to members – might be reported in one section of the site.
- The support of our Student servers throughout the year has continued to be an important but unobtrusive factor. Their reliability has been remarkable. I am pleased to be able to report that the first steps has already been taken to find their successors as their university years come to a close.
- Two Newsletters have been produced and circulated during the year to keep members

I have now come to the end of my three years in office as President and thank all my colleagues on the successive Councils for their help and support at the lectures, in putting together the programmes for each year and generally keeping the Society going. Personally it has been a very rewarding and happy period and in some ways the culmination of several strands of interest and work that I have taken up at various times over the last 55 years. What more could one ask of life?

John Ramster
President

FINANCE AND MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As membership continues to form such a large part of our financial affairs we are again submitting a joint report.

The Society's finances remain very healthy, as the attached accounts show. However, the paper surplus of £ 12501 shown includes £ 4850 collected towards the cost of the restoration of the Kelvin memorial during FY 2006-7 and not spent till the following year.

The most significant item is an increase of more than 40% in subscription income. This is partly attributable to an increase in subscription rates, but also to the very strong increase in membership numbers, which rose from 517 in 2005-6 to 624 in 2006-7. Since then membership has continued to grow, and at the end of February 2008 stood at 718.

Attendances have also grown as shown overleaf, from an average of 243 to 292, and the record set last year was broken within four meetings, and then broken again by more than 20%. In consequence the cost of refreshments at meetings has risen, but we have kept these costs down by employing students to assist with this, and we are grateful to them for their good-natured and efficient help.

We have also significantly reduced the cost of communicating with members by using e-mail wherever possible, and as agreed last year, we passed on this saving by introducing an additional discount for members who tell us their e-mail address. This, however, has added complexity to the structure of subscription rates, and Council now proposes simplification, so that there will be a single discount for "low maintenance" members, who both pay by standing order and provide an e-mail address.

The only other matter of note is the continuing healthy return on our investments, both in terms of dividend and market value. This is crucial, because subscriptions only cover around 40% of our costs. Council has long taken the view that we should not, however, hold all our investments in a single fund, and we are in the process of placing £ 30 000 of excess liquid funds with a Standard Life ethical fund.

In conclusion, we must record our thanks to Council for their support. Our independent accountant, Lewis Osborne LIB CA, has been as ever helpful and efficient, and we are happy to propose his reappointment.

Ephraim Borowski
Hon Vice-President
Membership Secretary

Leonard Turpie
Treasurer

Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow

LECTURES

205th Lecture Series

2006

4 October	Dr D Reilly	<i>Healing in a post-industrial age</i>	230
18 October	Prof Lalage Bown	<i>Women, words and the world</i>	205
1 November	Dr Alison Elliot	<i>Moderation in a world of extremes</i>	250
15 November	Prof B Caddy,	<i>Forensic science - servant of the legal process</i>	230
29 November	Prof C McLean	<i>The strange behaviour of investors</i>	175
13 December	Prof A McGrath	<i>The twilight of atheism?</i>	275

2007

10 January	Dr Ken Skeldon	<i>Debunking the Moon Hoax Theories</i>	270
24 January	Prof Philip Hanlon	<i>Threats to Public Health in the 21st Century</i>	205
7 February	Prof Patrick Reilly	<i>Decoding the Da Vinci Code</i>	235
21 February	Prof Simon Conway Morris	<i>How Evolution Dances to the Song of Creation</i>	310
7 March	Prof John Butt	<i>Does Classical Music still Exist?</i>	215
21 March	Prof A C Grayling	<i>Defending the Enlightenment</i>	320

206th Lecture Series

2007

3 October	Michael Fry	<i>The State of the Union – how 1707 led to 2007</i>	260
17 October	Prof Geoffrey Boulton	<i>What is happening to Planet Earth; and what might we do about it?</i>	245
31 October	Prof Aubrey Manning	<i>The Animals and Ourselves</i>	285
14 November	David Lorimer	<i>The frontiers of science, consciousness and spirituality.</i>	325
28 November	Stephen Law	<i>The war for children's minds</i>	305
12 December	Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell	<i>What's going on in the Universe</i>	315

2008

9 January	Prof John Wallace	<i>Music and Freedom</i>	250
23 January	Prof Sir Alec Jeffreys	<i>DNA fingerprinting and beyond</i>	380
6 February	Rt Hon Elish Angiolini QC	<i>Scots Law – What's so special about us?</i>	375
20 February	Prof Neil McKeganey	<i>Welcome to Scotland – drug capital of Europe</i>	240
5 March	Prof Wendy Hall	<i>Towards a Science of the World Wide Web</i>	230
19 March	Prof Allyson Pollock	<i>The NHS - implications for patients and public</i>	

Royal Philosophical Society of Glasgow

(a) In accordance with **Article III, sub-section 5** of the Articles of Association, Council makes the following nominations. No other nominations were received.

<i>President:</i>	Dr Felicity Grainger	(-)		
<i>Vice Presidents:</i>	Rev Colin Anderson	(1)		
	Mrs Adrienne Foulds	(-)		
	Dr Peter Maas	(-)		
<i>Secretary :</i>	Dr Claire Cassidy			
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Leonard Turpie			
<i>Council:</i>	Dr Stephen Bostock	(2)	Dr Helen Cargill Thompson	(1)
	Dr John Carnduff	(-)	Dr Rosemary Harley	(-)
	Dr Helen Laird	(-)	Prof Sir Roderick MacSween	(-)
	Alec Mitchell	(1)	Mrs Mairi Mitchell	(-)
	Prof. Kristin Morrison	(-)	Prof. David Murray-Smith	(-)

(Note: the numbers in brackets show the number of consecutive years for which the nominee has previously served in this post. Under Rule III (4), no member may hold the same office or membership of Council for more than three consecutive years.)

(b) In accordance with **Article II, sub-section 3** of the Articles of Association, Council recommends that the membership subscription from Session 2008-9 shall be as follows:

	<u>Full</u>	<u>Concession</u>
Standard membership	£ 25	£ 20
Discounted subscription for those paying by Standing Order AND providing an e-mail address (or sharing an address)	£ 15	£ 10

(c) In accordance with **Article V, sub-section 5(c)** Council also recommends that Lewis Osborne LIB CA of 2 Falkland Ave, Glasgow G46 7JN be re-appointed as independent accountant to scrutinise the Society's accounts.

On behalf of the Council,

Mairi Mitchell
Secretary