

# Annual General Meeting 2011

## The Tolkien Society

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### ***Agenda***

Annual General Meeting,  
Saturday,

April 16, 2011 at 3pm

1. Election of a chairman for the meeting
2. Welcome and opening comments
3. Apologies for absence
4. Minutes of the 2010 AGM
  - a) Corrections and approval
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5. Committee Reports and Accounts
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7. Level of Subscriptions for 2010-2011
8. Election of Officers for 2011-2012  
(Note: since this agenda is being printed prior to the cut-off date for nominations, the full list of nominations will be provided at the meeting.)
9. Venue of the 2012 AGM and Dinner
10. Any Other Business

**Please remember to bring your membership cards to the meeting.**

Large Print versions of this publication are available on request

(with reasonable notice so that they can be printed).

The Tolkien Birthday Toast on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January has become a regular event and, as usual, attracted support from Tolkien fans all around the world. Many thanks to Andrew Armstrong and his helpers who did their usual sterling job in setting up the web pages, while dealing with the fallout from an attempt to hack our server. (Of which more later.)

Last year, Rachael Livermore very kindly did a lot of the legwork in finding and booking the venue for the AGM in Brighton, before having to move out of the area. My thanks to everyone who helped me finalise the details and make the final arrangements.

This year the Society had two Seminars, one in Birmingham, England and the other in Melbourne, Australia. Ian Collier, our Education Secretary, ably co-ordinated both events. Maggie Burns very kindly helped organise the venue at the Birmingham Central Library and as well as talks on "Tolkien's Birmingham" Ian organised a visit to the Staffordshire Hoard, the major Anglo-Saxon archaeological find. He also arranged for a donation from the proceeds of the day to be made to the preservation fund, a very worthy cause which I'm sure the Professor would have approved of. The Australian seminar (on the theme of "Tolkien's Odysseys - Middle-Earth and Beyond") was organised again by Michael Kennedy, our Australian representative.

Oxonmoot gives both members and visiting scholars the chance to present the results of their studies to an interested audience, as well as creating fellowship among Tolkien fans. Our thanks go to Trevor Reynolds and the Oxonmoot sub-comm, who all worked very hard to create a wonderful weekend. As an increasing number of academic papers on Tolkien and connected topics have been presented at Oxonmoot in recent years, Ian Collier has been working to arrange for their publication.

The Society's plans for the future include a major conference, along the lines of Tolkien 2005, in 2012. We are very grateful to Lynn Whitaker, who volunteered to take on the sub-com Chair's role, and Steve Gardner, who took over as Treasurer. We held a meeting to assess the viability of the event in December 2010 and were very pleased to be able to give the go-ahead for what looks to be a wonderful event.

After a number of years, and due to the hard work of Andrew Butler, we were able to finally produce the Souvenir booklet from the 2005 conference. As this was supposed to be sent to all attendees, we had the challenging

task of identifying up to date addresses for those who were no longer members or who we no longer had contact with. My thanks to Susan Edwards and Andrew Butler, who between them did a wonderful job of contacting most of the attendees. At the end of the year, we decided that we had made all reasonable efforts to contact people, but we will still keep some of the booklets on hand, just in case anybody further gets in touch.

As I mentioned above, in the middle of December last year we suffered from an attempt to hack the server on which the TS website and mailing lists are hosted. All indications are that it was an automated attack, intended to take over our system and use it for sending out spam, but only actually succeeding in damaging it. It came at a time when Andrew McMurray and Andrew Armstrong were both suffering from ill-health, and Andrew M. was away from home, but they still managed to get the system up and running again within a few days. As some of you may be aware, we contacted everyone who's details we had stored, just in case any card details had been misused, but we had no reports of any problems. As a result of the hack, we have been revisiting our security arrangements, and taking various steps, just in case of a future attack. Our thanks to the Andrews for their hard work in getting everything sorted so quickly, and to Stephe Coane, who wrote up our report for the Data Commissioners.

After presenting a draft copy of the Code of Conduct at last year's meeting, we also arranged for it to be published in Amon Hen for comments from members. As there were no issues raised with the document, we have brought it back to this meeting for any final comments.

To add to that Ian Collier has been working on a guide for new Trustees and Officers, which we hope will be of use to new volunteers.

Speaking of new volunteers, I want to thank Ian Spittlehouse, who volunteered to stand as an OWP at the last AGM and has been a very welcome addition to the committee.

As you know, Ian Collier has been holding two roles for a number of years, and hoping that someone would come forward to take on the position of Publicity Officer. So he, and we, were very grateful to Becky Hitchin, who volunteered to take on the job last autumn and has been gradually making it her own.

I also want to thank the rest of the Committee, all of whom have made my job much easier over the last 12 months. In particular, Andrew Butler, who has just reliably got on with editing Amon Hen, and put up with a lot of last minute additions to his issues. Henry Gee, who has produced two colourful and interesting issues of Mallorn. Lyn Wilshire for continuing the challenging role of Booking Officer, Susan Edwards who has continued in the role of liaison to the International Tolkien Fellowship, Carol Brownlow who is writing News From Fangorn, the Entings publication and Anne Mathison who has continued to manage Mathom. Also Andy Armstrong and his team, who have continued their work updating the website, one of the major public faces of the Society.

Pat and Trevor Reynolds have combined working in several different roles for the Society with also helping out with other committee matters and have been a great support over the last year.

This year has not been any easier in many ways for the Trustees than last, even with a new and welcome addition to our number. I want to thank the others for their hard work and commitment, without which the Society could not have continued to function. Martin has settled into the role of Treasurer, with the much appreciated help of his wife Annie Haward. Marion Kershaw has just got on with the major role of Membership Secretary, as well as helping with various other tasks. Ian Collier has continued to perform the role of Education Secretary as well as Publicity Officer, while looking after his young daughter. Madeline Flint has reliably performed the role of Secretary and helped out in other capacities, while being a major support to me in my responsibilities. Stephie Coane, Andrew Wells and Ian Spittlehouse as OWPs have performed a whole range of roles, including liaison to the various sub-comms and TST, and generally provided advice and support.

*Sally Kennett*

### ***Treasurer***

Another year has passed, so it's time for another AGM report. I'm writing this before the accounts have been pulled together, so I cannot give details in this report. As ever, full (but provisional) accounts will be available at the AGM. By provisional, I mean that accounts will not have been submitted to the independent examiners, but will be in a form that I would be happy to present to those examiners. There are two main reasons for this, firstly, it takes a slightly more than one month to get all the banks statements in to make sure that all the transactions for the previous year have been identified; secondly, it relies on the good auspices of Annie to prepare the accounts and catch all the unforced errors that I may have introduced. As Annie is doing a degree in Egyptology at the moment, at Liverpool University for two days a week, free time is somewhat limited. As I write this, she is preparing a presentation on the physical dangers of insects and animals to people in ancient Egypt and the medication (and magical amulets) the people used to alleviate the effects.

Overall, it's been a quiet year financially, if the run up to 2012 isn't included. A conference of that size and complexity is more than enough to keep us all focussed. Quiet, in this context, does not mean that nothing has happened. Much of the treasurer's job is routine. Expenses claim forms are checked and then paid, bank statements are checked also and reconciled. Questions about expenditure need to be answered, for instance, how much the Society contributed to a blue plaque in Birmingham in 2002.

We have the Citibank account still, that is the US dollar account that was set up for the 2005 conference. Money is in the process of being transferred over to reduce the risk to the Society although it requires \$5,000 minimum within it to keep us from having to pay charges on each transaction. Having this account makes it easier for people in the US and Canada to pay subscriptions and, hopefully, registration for the 2012 conference.

There are two deposit accounts held by the Bank of Ireland. One is a bond that has matured now, the other is a simple interest generating account. The interest account has been paying around £0.85 per month, which for a £4,000 deposit is pretty dismal. Unfortunately, with the current financial climate, this is standard for general interest earning accounts. Whilst reviewing the current savings accounts, I started to think about what the Society was holding money for and how long it should be holding it. There are a few deposit accounts that pay much better interest but require the money to remain untouched for long periods, hence the thoughts about the Society's future investment strategy.

The Middle Earth weekend, held at Sarehole Mill near Birmingham, has proven to be a good publicity and sales opportunity for the Society. As reported at the previous AGM, the event was in danger of being cancelled so a donation of £500 was made to the Birmingham Tolkien Group to ensure that it was staged in 2010. As the Society has had free exhibition space at the event, this was felt to be a good investment for the future as well as saying thank you for generosity in years gone by. Whether or not this was sufficient to ensure the long term future of the event remains to be seen as Birmingham City Council is under the same financial pressure as most other institutions and they are being forced by central government to make cuts across the board.

Expenditure due to the 2005 conference still continues. Whilst there are continuing sales of the proceedings, the souvenir booklet was costed into the registration fee and all delegates who attended are due a copy. For most it was simple, they were still members and we had current address details. However, others had moved and dropped out of the Society. Sterling efforts to trace these missing attendees have located a good many, and during 2010 over £1,000 was spent in postage to send out copies of the booklet.

During the year, it was decided to replace the ancient power amplifier that has served the Society well for more than 20 years. I built it from parts bought second hand, parts that were scrounged and two amplifier boards provided by Andy Armstrong. Andy did some research and we both went browsing around the music shops of London one Saturday. The best replacement was a combined mixer amplifier the weighed less than the old

amplifier. This has meant that one of the mixer desks has become redundant. This has been owned by the Society since the mid 90s but hasn't been used for five or six years. The mixer will be sold on eBay or a similar website but if anyone would like to make an offer, please talk to me.

Problems with the HSBC bank account that was supposed to be the main repository for 2012 registrations meant that it was necessary to open another account in a hurry so that money could be banked. For reasons known only to HSBC, adding extra signatories proved to be inordinately difficult. A Barclays account was opened and is now operating normally. Because the HSBC account details have been published on booking forms, the account is still extant but will be phased out when registrations for 2012 have tailed off.

As ever, I owe a debt of gratitude to Annie for preparing the accounts and to Anne Riney for operating the US \$ account.

*Martin Smith*

## ***Secretary***

This has been my second year holding the post of Secretary and has been another fairly standard year as far as those duties go.

The Committee has held six meetings this year, all of them located at the Central Library in Birmingham. We are extremely grateful to Maggie Burns for facilitating the use of library rooms. I attended and minuted five of these meetings. The sixth I missed due to ill health and I am grateful to Lyn Wilshire for stepping up to the crease as temporary officer. In addition to these regular meetings we held a review meeting with the Trustees and members of the Return of the Ring sub-committee in Birmingham at the end of 2010, to look at how that event was progressing. We were delighted with the progress that Lynn Whittaker and her team were able to demonstrate and reaffirmed the commitment of the Society to seeing that event through in 2012. The minutes of the main committee meetings were prepared for publication in Behind Glass Doors in Amon Hen.

I have provided a secretarial service for members of the Society who needed forms that were available on the internet, that they could not access themselves, and it remains an option for people to write and request copies of documents if necessary, although this is a resource that is only used very rarely these days. I have also acted as a point of contact for people and organisations outside the Society.

Following on from the AGM I undertook redrafting of the Code of Conduct which was subsequently included in Amon Hen for consideration by members. Generally this has been well-received and is once again on the AGM agenda. At the meeting with Return of the Ring members I also agreed to undertake the role of liaison to the sub-committee, along with Ian Spittlehouse. Thanks as ever go to my fellow Trustees and committee members for mutual support and understanding in a year that has not been without challenges.

*Madeline Flint*

### ***Membership Secretary***

At the end of December 2010 we had 799 members and 38 Entings. There were 41 Associate Members, 693 Full, 3 Corporate, 14 Honorary, 13 Libraries, 17 Exchange and 18 Special members, covering 35 countries and every continent around the world.

Although the total is 26 down on that of 2010, at least some of the shortfall can be put down to circumstances in November and December which prevented the usual winter renewals reaching me before the end of the year; first there were delays at the printers which stopped Amon Hen and the renewal forms going out on time, and then snow closing the airports prevented mailings getting out to members and overseas subscriptions getting back to me.

During 2010 I dealt with 486 renewals, sent out 115 New Members Packs, despatched 6 sets of Carol's News From Fangorn reports to our Entings and 6 sets of renewal notices and mailing lists to our printers. I made 27 two-hour bus journeys to and from the nearest HSBC to pay in cheques, travelled to Birmingham 6 times for Committee meetings, and trotted to and from my local post-box so many times I'm surprised I haven't worn a groove in the pavement; luckily, the nearest post-box is less than a minute's walk away. The postwoman, delivering yet another bundle, asked me one day, "just what *is* the Tolkien Society?" and I was able to do a little publicising on the doorstep. Ours being a small town, I think any letter addressed simply to "The Tolkien Society, Todmorden," would now find its way to me... but to be on the safe side, please don't try it.

88 of our new members joined online, 22 by mail, and 5 in person. Of those who gave their source, 44, found us via the Internet; 20 were old members renewing, 10 found out about us from friends or work colleagues, 15 from conventions or Oxonmoot, book signings, publications, and US Tolkien groups. Four memberships were gifts.

£6668.00 was paid in by cheque, £10653.95 by credit and debit cards, and £721 by bank transfer. We do get a few cash payments, mainly from members met at TS events, and at least one overseas member who every year sends an interesting combination of stamps, notes and pound coins. We are still investigating the possibilities of using Direct Debit, and will hopefully have something to report on this by the time of the next AGM.

Thanks once again to those members who were able to Gift-Aid their membership payments; the TS gained £1884.86 this way in 2010. Thanks also to those members who added donations to their payments; these amounted to £208.

There are members all over the world who, along with their renewals, send good wishes, friendly messages and postcards; this really reinforces the feeling of being part of a worldwide community. Thanks to all for making it another good year.

*Marion Kershaw*

### ***Education secretary***

I started this report in early February to be cunning and get ahead of the deadline. And then illness, visitors and Emma's illness have put me back so I'm doing this a few days before the submission date. It seems that in the TS good plans and good ideas tend to get set aside by 'life'; which is another way of me saying that I haven't got as much done as I'd have liked. Still it is not all bad news and some projects are making progress. I'm still enjoying the Trustee post of Education Secretary. Admittedly this is perhaps because I'm still sharing the "TS Education" work with Lynn Forest-Hill as Education Officer - and I'm no longer doubling up doing Publicity as we have a new publicity officer! The education team works well and we've both been busy in our areas. Lynn has continued to act as the public face of TS Education bearing the brunt of enquiries (work), whilst I have kept busy with Trustee matters, contemplating how the TS does things, arranging or helping others arrange Seminars, sorting out past Seminar and Oxonmoot 'proceedings' and trying to get them published.

I should like to formally note my thanks to Kate Wilkins for trying very hard to get all the papers from Oxonmoot 2009 & 2010, to Sue Bridgwater for volunteering to edit them into Proceedings, to Vicky Varelas & Kimberly Lynch the education volunteers for the work they put in on the education pages of the website and collating the list of Tolkien courses around the world.

So that's the summary but I daresay readers would like a little more substance.

**The Seminar** is probably the most obvious education item in the TS calendar, although Tolkien Reading day may get more headlines and interest around the world, followed shortly by the papers at Oxonmoot. In **2011** the Ironville & Codnor School Myth & Magic Reading Group have offered to host the event, we just need to confirm a date in July and look into the details and theme. In **2010** we had two seminars, one in **Birmingham** in late June and one in **Melbourne, Australia**, at the end of August, with the themes respectively “Tolkien’s Birmingham” and “Tolkien’s Odysseys - Middle-Earth and Beyond”. **Birmingham** The venue the Central Library’s ‘Shakespeare Memorial Room’ room was kindly arranged for the TS by Maggie Burns and the day went well with 28 people booked (including an accidentally booked but non-attending Pat Reynolds). Talks were given by Bob Blackham, Angie Gardner & Neil Holford, and Maggie Burns; as well as a talk followed by a friendly and animated discussion session on the Birmingham Tolkien Strategy (and what to do with it now) led by the Deputy Lord Mayor Mick Wilkes. Afterwards we took tea at the museum’s Edwardian Tea-Rooms before viewing the section of the Staffordshire Hoard that is on public display. As the events costs were very low the Trustees felt that the Society should contribute £200 of the surplus to the fund to preserve and display the Hoard. Sadly the Birmingham Seminar talks aren’t publishable, bar one and that has been published in Mallorn. **Melbourne** had with five papers and 21 people booked (of whom 2 couldn’t attend) including 4 UK attendees. The collection of papers is well in hand and Michael Kennedy has suggested publishing the 2 Australian Seminars in one volume. I think that a good idea.

### **Seminar Proceedings:**

I have the papers for **2009 London** but whilst doing all these other things I haven’t made the progress I would like on editing them together. However, work is progressing albeit slowly. Anyway the backlog in date order then: **2008 Roehampton** - we have papers from 3 out of 5 authors, another has said they will send it but that it needs re-editing and whilst the last author was tracked down a year ago I’ve not been able to sort out getting their paper. **2007 Cambridge** - I reported last year that this seminar had been a mess for tracking down the papers but we now have all the publishable papers and it is merely a matter of finding time, or a volunteer with such, to edit them for publication. **2007 Sydney** - Michael has been making progress gathering the papers in, although this work has slowed down around organising the Melbourne event and gathering those papers in. **2006 Norwich** - One of the papers has been sent as a print out but gave indications that it had previously been emailed so I’m trying to track it, and any others that may have been likewise emailed down. Otherwise I need to send Trevor Reynolds a list of authors and titles so we can confirm which were never going to be publishable by their nature/author’s desire and which we could get. **2003 Farnborough** - This and the Norwich Seminar

are the remaining possible items out of last year's list of long past seminars as yet unpublished; all the others have been written off since the last AGM. As with 2006 I need to sort out with Trevor about contacting the various authors. Monty Thorp found a draft of her mother's 2003 paper amongst her chattels but whether it is an early version or her working copy is hard to say. **2002 Whitby** - Last year I mentioned that this had been put on hold pending Matthew Vernon completing his PhD, well he got it but promptly had to submit various papers, grant applications and secure a job, I hope that he will soon be able to help out again.

**Oxonmoot Proceedings:** Kate Wilkins the Day Time Events rep has very kindly contacted all the people offering items at Oxonmoots 2009 & 2010, and Sue Bridgwater volunteered to edit the collated papers into publishable form. The delay has been getting the all papers in, or in the cases of those items from a speaker's published works the idea is for an abstract about the book and ideally an advert for it from the publishers to provide seed money for production. For 2009 there are still some 5 items to come in, and of course 2010 has only just happened so it's understandable that there will be a delay (but at least one author seems to prefer to ignore requests), especially as the aim is to make Oxonmoot's academic side more accessible without undercutting attendance so there will also be a production delay. I have also been offered a paper from 2004's Oxonmoot and took the time to make a list of all the papers offered from 1990 until 2010 (152 items) so that we can look at what might be publishable and also to provide a research resource. At some point it is hoped to create a database of titles and authors.

**Tolkien Reading Day 2011:** the theme is "Tolkien's Trees" to tie in with the International Year of Forests". Publicity has been requested and liaised over and the study packs have been updated to the new theme (and Lynn has done most of that work with my adding comments and additional information).

**Tolkien to the World:** This project has languished for far too long and it seems we may have someone (albeit a non-member) willing to take on the volunteer co-ordinator role. I've been co-ordinating discussion on how we proceed and have put out a request for artwork for the bookplates.

Other Education work:

**Chasing 2005's 'Missing' Papers:** It seems that some 40+ papers were offered that were either not submitted for the Proceedings or which have gone astray. As one of these was from Verlyn Flieger, Andrew & Sarah Wells proposed a Supplement volume and I've done some work on sorting out the

list of 'missing' papers and tried to find contact details for as many authors as possible. Now we need to co-ordinate what we have that missed the editing of the Proceedings and what we need to ask for. **Hamburg Fantasy Conference/ Gesellschaft für Fantastikforschung:** Meggy McMurry passed on details of a new academic conference and organisation the organisers of which wish to make both a regular event and also an event with links and liaison across academia and fandom. We got in touch and sent them some TS freebies and a set of 2005 Proceedings (these are now in their library, and the TS goodies hopefully adorn various library stands too). However, things have gone rather quiet. **Journal of Inklings Studies:** Having previously asked about merging Mallorn with the Oxford CS Lewis Society's revamped journal their new Inklings journal has now launched. I think the TS should watch how this progresses, as an academic journal it seems that they occupy a niche and have funding possibly from larger groups in the US. We won't be able to compete or copy them unless somehow the TS benefits financially from somewhere, but we should maintain friendly connections. **List of Tolkien Courses:** As part of its educational remit it has been felt that the TS should act as a first contact point and resource for scholars. To that end the TS webpages carry a list of educational courses that include Tolkien and other useful links. This was put together by Kimberly Lynch. The TS links pages also afforded some work and light relief as Andy Armstrong asked about a possible weblink, but on looking at the pages I felt there were too many errors (eg "*A year before his death, he [Tolkien] was named a Commander of the Order of the British Empire by the regent, Queen Victoria II*"). **Project Woruldhord:** A new Oxford University project to put Anglo-Saxon items (texts, images, papers etc) online has started and Lynn Forest-Hill has had an item accepted and nudged them to mention Tolkien. I think this should be a project that the Society should keep tabs on and ideally liaise with. **Return of the Ring:** Lynn asked me about educational stream events, and I made various suggestions which I hope are useful and fruitful. **Old Peter Roes:** For the third year running I will note that I think the TS needs to look seriously at the idea of reprinting some of the old Peter Roe booklets, either singly or as collected works for newer members and the general public however, it has had to wait due to lack of time and other things. It is still a project that could be put into place once we clarify the copyright position and made fair arrangements with individual authors, illustrators, and editors before sorting anything else out. **Trustees' Guide & Appointed Officers' Guide:** The information book (36 pages of TS history, constitution, policy and useful information) has now been written aimed at new and incumbent Trustees and then with the Trustee relevant bits removed it can also help out new or incumbent holders of the other committee posts. The intention is to circulate it as a PDF with an amendment date on the front cover so that as information changes (eg the Constitution), or policies are rewritten or created new elements can be incorporated and re-circulated without the expense of printing and posting out the guide.

In addition to the above since the Brighton AGM the Society has continued give freely of its knowledge, expertise, and access to sources to benefit members of the public, students, and authors (in Britain and around the world) as they sought information or guidance, help with reading lists, details of books, confirmation of information from other sources, Lynn Forest-Hill's report gives some details but as ever it seems that very often we supply more information or been more helpful than was expected.

As for general Trustee work in the run-up to the AGM:

**AGMs:** In the light of some confusion as to what appears and when for the AGM notices I generated a list of 'Amon Hens' and the AGM details therein going back to 1990 so as to insert some info into the Trustees Guide and for the benefit of a possible 'How to Set Up an AGM' guide. **Birmingham & Sarehole:** I've also done a little liaison work with Mick Wilkes (Deputy Lord Mayor of Brum), Viv Wilkes, and Dave Corby about the **Birmingham Tolkien Group**, and the **Shire Country Park Friends** group, including suggesting that the TS has a formal liaison to both. In addition I've tried to be the liaison to the Middle-earth Weekend planning group. There's a project planned at Sarehole Mill for the development of a small herb garden and scented walk around the mill pool. The possible Memorial Prize is still being discussed as time and other work permits. I've prepared a Disaster Recovery letter for the Secretary with relevant email details and passwords in a sealed envelope. I've also authorised various payments of invoices or expenses through the online system at CAF Bank, and read, pondered, and discussed, things on the Trustees' List including: the Oxonmoot handbook; the various tribulations around this Oxonmoot (mailboxes, questionable allegations of smoking in rooms, etc); changes to TS Event Terms & conditions; I looked out old emails regarding the Blue Plaque at Sarehole Mill with regard to the possible plaque in Leeds; the provision of back-issues or library loan copies of articles of Mallorn; child protection and the TS Policy, the dissolution of the library; the Festival in the Shire; and doings regarding the 2012 event. Sadly as I write this I must own up to the fact that the Copyright FAQ is still a work-in-slow-progress (sorry).

*Ian Collier*

### ***OWP: Stephie Coane***

I attended six committee meetings, and continued in the role of Trustee liaison officer to the Return of the Ring 2012 subcommittee including attending those online meetings I was available for and the face to face meeting on Oxonmoot Sunday; I also researched some issues of volunteer management on behalf of our new Return of the Ring chair, Lynn Whitaker. In early December a meeting was held between the Trustees and representatives of the subcommittee to assess the financial viability of the event before the next venue payment fell due; the subcommittee rose to the occasion, convincing us that after the changes of the previous eighteen

months, all was on course for a fantastic event. On behalf of the Trustees I would like to thank Pat for guiding the subcommittee through the difficult transition period, and Lynn for bringing such infectious enthusiasm (and tablet!) to the committee. I would also like to thank Maddy for taking over the liaison role, and everyone else who has been working towards the event.

In the course of general “trusteeing” I participated in mailing list discussions on a variety of subjects, authorized payments and liaised with the Mallorn editor as required.

Most recently I have drafted a report for the Information Commissioner’s Office regarding a minor data breach on the Tolkien Society server in mid-December, to seek advice on any further steps we can take to minimize the chances of a recurrence. I also hope to take a more active role in advising “the two Andrews” on those aspects of the website and bookings database that would benefit from a non-technical perspective.

It has been a very enjoyable (though occasionally demanding) four years as a Trustee and at the time of writing I haven’t yet decided whether I will be standing for re-election as Officer without Portfolio, or taking a “sabbatical” to spend time on other projects for a year. So... expect me when you see me!

*Stephie Coane*

### ***OWP: Ian Spittlehouse***

Having had no experience of committee life, twelve months ago I didn’t know what to expect. Firstly there is the business of being an OWP, and more importantly, what would be expected of someone in that post as a Trustee of the Tolkien Society. So the last year has been an education (how appropriate!). Not having volunteered before I suppose that being elected as a Trustee was really in at the deep-end. After getting to grips with the dynamics of the committee and attending the ‘main comm’ meetings I have a better appreciation of the day to day administration of Society.

I can only admire the cumulative achievement of volunteers past and present, and the how their administrations have seen the Society’s activities expand.

On a personal note, this year has seen me fielding email enquiries (specifically from the Leeds Civic Trust), assisting at Oxonmoot where I managed hospitality (albeit incognito), providing liaison/encouragement to the hosts of this year’s AGM and deputizing as liaison with the Return of the

Ring sub-committee. In a more 'back office' capacity I have been producing in-house instructions for the Society (specifically tech support).

*Ian Spittlehouse*

### ***Amon Hen Editor***

Well, once again it has been a bit of a mixed year. It is a (perhaps regrettable) fact of life that, when things go O.K. (or even better than O.K.), it scarcely registers, but when they go less well, almost everyone notices.

Most issues have come out (pretty much) on time, but we have seen how a concatenation of "if only that hadn't happened," events can soon add up to a major delay. I apologise for my part in such things (and I'm sure the other people involved would also, if they had the chance).

There is also the fact that material has been so much less plentiful than in some years that we have had a couple of shorter issues. Of course, 32 pages is still good compared with years when the average was only 28 (or even lower), but still...

On the other hand, the quality of contributions has generally been very good (I'll leave it to the readers to judge which were the truly outstanding items) and there has been a good mix of 'new faces' and 'old hands'.

One more thing I feel I must get off my chest, though, is people pushing their luck with deadlines (or just missing them completely). If this were new members, who didn't yet know any better, then I'd be a lot more sympathetic, but they (and even non-members) are actually quite good; it seems to be people who should know most about deadlines and the effects of missing them that are the worst culprits... I think I'd better leave it at that, as I could so easily go on for too long and get too grouchy, without getting the point across any more clearly. Just bear in mind: on time is good; early is even better!

So as not to end on a sour note, I'd like to thank all the contributors. I'm really lucky to get so many pleasant surprises and, however grumpy I may sound at times, I do still thoroughly enjoy editing *Amon Hen* (at least, more often than not) and, from what I hear, a lot of members enjoy reading it (and looking at the pictures - thanks again Jef!). Let's keep on with more of the same.

*Andrew A P Butler*

## **Archivist**

The forward plan for archives work has continued to be taken forwards slowly. The transfer from PastPerfect to Ehive has continued apace. Thanks to a grant, I have a new scanner, and excel software which were needed to start transfers (alas, the grant was to help me as a student of another course rather than to benefit the TS archives, a course which has somewhat slowed the process).

I added almost 300 backlog/new items over the year, including all the Tolkien Society papers, the objects, and the media items (tapes, cds, records). 13 new collections or individual items were added, plus the normal accrual of journals. Preparatory work has been done on transferring books and journals. I encourage people to go and look at the archives at <http://ehive.com/account/3437> and to add tags, correct details and otherwise help!

The archives have continued to be stored in excellent conditions at the Surrey History Centre in Woking. A replacement for Hazel Foreman (regional museums conservator) has been identified, and I will approach her about the repackaging of objects in (harmful) plastic packaging. In other good news, a volunteer with experience of digital preservation policy writing has offered help.

*Pat Reynolds*

## **Bookings Officer**

Since last AGM I have handled the bookings for 2 seminars, Oxonmoot and Return of the Ring (2012)

I have had a great deal of support with bookings when I was in meltdown, and must thank Angela, Steve, Martin, Andy and Andrew for their help, great patience and practical help. Neil is quite looking forward to me being Oxonmoot Chair again - at least then I only had one major breakdown a year!

### **Seminars**

Seminars are always nice and easy, and both the Australian and British went without a hitch, as far as I am aware.

### **Oxonmoot**

There were 183 booked and the usual couple of last minute cancellations/arrivals, but no major problems. We did promise twin room refunds at the event, which did not happen for a variety of reasons. Martin and I will bring this up with the subcomm and decide on how we deal with

the twin room issue in future. There is still one refund due to someone who booked an extra night and then cancelled, but that is my mistake and I have apologised. I am waiting for her bank details to make the payment.

I have contacted the subcomm list and Andrew McMurry about getting organised for this year, particularly the online form.

2012

There are 121 booked (55 concession) and 2 babes. Booking have slowed down since the prices rose but we were expecting that it would be quiet at this time. We are proposing a discount of £10 off the Registration for 2012 for everyone who attends Oxonmoot (and pays on the day) and there are plans to leaflet every event any of our members attend over the summer.

The online booking form is still causing people problems, especially if they are trying to add accommodation when they have already registered. Andrew sorts them out as they arise but I still spend a lot of time emailing people about their confirmation emails, explaining why the amounts are wrong. I pray it's better for this year. I am assured that it will be possible to pull information such as badge names from the data for lists, but I am still anxious about it, and suspect I will end up typing out lists, which would not be a Good Thing.

*Lyn Wilshire*

### ***Education Officer***

Answered the usual variety of interesting queries. Some of which led to ongoing correspondence with writers, students, researchers and translators. Among the most significant have been:

Contacts:

- with a Vietnamese-American student who after having her story printed in AH now wants to go on to study in England.
- contact is ongoing with the talented girls at the Ironville and Codnor school.
- a graduate who had requested some help while writing his thesis on this work. He completed successfully and is now looking at a career in teaching.
- regarding the possibility that Tolkien drew on the relationship between Sassoon and Owen for the relationship between Frodo and Sam. John Garth kindly responded to the enquiry.
- about finding a copy of Christopher Tolkien's edition of King Heidrek's saga.

- We received a question about spoken Old English. The query was specifically about recordings to Tolkien reading or speaking OE. Apart from Tolkien, there is an excellent reading of *Beowulf* by Michael Drout.
- Another enquiry was about how to find high-quality reproductions of artwork by Tolkien.
- Still getting requests for the **Anglo-Saxon** packs and one enquiry for help tracing Tolkien use of Mercian in the language of Rohan.
- Request for information about Tolkien-based tours of the Cotswolds from a university tutor in USA. Nothing useful could be found, but a new contact established.
- A contact from the past has been in touch again regarding help with poetry. This is ongoing.

Various **bibliographical enquires** were dealt with including

- on Tolkien's use of nature
- on theological themes in Tolkien's work.
- on female characters and their treatment in *The Silmarillion*.

At the time the Wheaton Bibliography was not functioning well, but it is now and is very useful.

We had another request for help with getting hold of free or cheap books. Hopefully the new committee and volunteer interest in TTTW will make some difference to these requests in the future.

Personal contributions to the education mission

- Helped review a translation from Italian into English which was later published by Walking Tree. The translator is now launching a new Tolkien Reading Group in Florence.
- My contribution to Reading Day this year was a small blog on Tolkien, Seafaring, and the South.
- a short piece on the derivations of the name Meriadoc. David Doughan noticed it online and kindly contributed additional information.
- Posted A-S study packs on the Oxford Project Woruldhorde site which will shortly 'go live' with additional blurb about Tolkien being a common first encounter with OE for many people. The posting generated contact from a Spanish scholar and teacher with a special interest in Tolkien.

- Establish contact with the Association for Research in the Fantastic, based at the University of Hamburg's *Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik*. The Association also provides a journal to encourage academic research.
- TLS article on Tolkien's Caves generated a number of letters to the paper, helping to keep the education mission going in a small way.

*Lynn Forest-Hill*

### ***Mallorn Editor***

1) The past year saw the production of Mallorns 49 and 50. Mallorn 51 is in preparation and might be with you by the time of the AGM.

2) I have been working hard with Production Editor Colin Sullivan to evolve a consistent style. We are still tweaking it here and there. A major ongoing project has been to work with authors to produce a style of references and annotation in 'Commentary' articles (that is, scholarly articles) that is flexible, consistent, and, above all, concise. We believe we now have one in place, and it should appear in Mallorn 51. A revised Guide to Authors will also be published in that issue.

3) Mallorn also has a Facebook page which can be found at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Mallorn-the-Journal-of-the-Tolkien-Society/146718577117>

This page is used to keep readers abreast of how issues are developing and to solicit copy. This has 378 subscribers at present, though activity is generally low.

4) I'd like to thank Colin Sullivan for making the appearance of Mallorn both professional and accessible; all our contributors; and to the Tolkien Society for its continuing support.

5) I'd like to apologise for my general non-appearance at Maincom, AGM and Oxonmoot. This is largely due to limitations in time and, increasingly, money. I hope I can be forgiven for this as long as I keep churning out Mallorn.

*Henry Gee*

### ***Publicity Officer***

This is my last ever report to an AGM as TS Publicity Officer! In fact I liked typing that so much I'll say it again: This is my last ever report to an AGM as TS Publicity Officer! Yup Becky Hitchin is the new publicity person; please see her report [below] on doings since December/January. I'm writing this last one as between the Brighton AGM and the Christmas-New Year period I

was the person 'in-post' we just had an extended hand-over to fit around busy lives.

As ever the year was much like previous ones, there were the usual TS events and others that required press releases or announcements to be circulated or work at the event, with the addition of work and later hassles caused by certain events in Wales. The main events were the Sarehole Mill Weekend; the UK Games Expo; the Seminar; Oxonmoot; and the Tolkien Birthday Toast. In addition last summer there was the Festival in the Shire. All TS events need the sending out press releases by e-mail to the media and various websites, newsgroups or messageboards, and sometimes post too still though for local news contacts for events. I've been lucky enough to have a good team of volunteers to post news on various Tolkien fan messageboards, whilst I have dealt with groups on Facebook and the HarperCollins' boards. I'd like to thank John Davis, Bonnie Marques, and Hanusia Tkaczyk for all the time they've put into helping me out with the posting of news on various boards. I'd also like to thank Linda Jones for taking a pile of TS stuff to the Festival in the Shire even if the promised two tables against a wall became one table in the middle of a space, and Debbie Higgins who offered to help out there before starting her post at The Kilns, but who couldn't attend after all.

AGM Matter Arising - regarding 2012: Return of the Ring. In response to Phil Lloyd's question regarding the possible advertising of the TS during the Olympics I emailed Jason Finch & Pat Reynolds who work in culture and heritage and who are professionally informed. Their considered responses chime with what Trevor said during the 2010 AGM that banners etc are only going to be for 'partners' and even those sponsoring organisations are being made to jump through some surprising hoops. Regarding advertising on the London Underground the answer was that the TS does not have the money. It would appear that even places where a free ad was possible will be considering charging during the Olympics. The best bet will be to get some sort of article written about the Society in a magazine that people may read then.

What's been done since 2010's AGM?

**The TS on Twitter**, on 26<sup>th</sup> April I set up a twitter account tied to the publicity email. As a matter of courtesy the TS tweet follows back those that follow it; especially as this often puts it in front of more people when posts are 'retweeted'. Tweets thus far have been about the Seminars, the UKGamesExpo, Oxonmoot, the Festival in the Shire, the Edge of the Wild, the New York events, Born of Hope' at Oxonmoot, the Birthday Toast, 2012, and Tom Shippey's lecture in Cardiff. At the time of writing have **623** followers. Thus the TS now has a publicity persona on Live Journal, Dreamwidth, Facebook, and Twitter to pass news around about the TS or TS and related events so if you are on those please come and 'friend' or 'follow'

us. Next there was publicity work for May's **Middle-earth Weekend (MeWe)** at Sarehole Mil. The event set up its own website using site hosting through Viv Wilkes after discussion with the TS about possible TS hosting and the url is [MiddleearthWeekend.org.uk](http://MiddleearthWeekend.org.uk). Dave Corby chaired the planning group for the last time and the event was generally felt to be very successful. I re-circulated the Guest of honour invites and had replies (no) from Billy Boyd's agents and (tell us more) from Bernard Hill's so I passed those onto Dave. I also set up a Facebook event page, wrote and circulated a press release, dealt with some radio interest in an interview and created new style display posters, although they could do with more work as well as replacing all the other bits in due course. We also had a display of some artwork from one of our local members which attracted a lot of attention. Anke, Emma and me hosted the main TS group who were manning the TS stand (Sally Kennett, Maddy Flint, Stephie Coane, Pat & Trevor Reynolds, and Alex Davidson with Martin Smith delivering display boards and Andrew Wells helping flog stuff from the TST stand). The weekend was quite sunny with a good number of visitors; it was also an opportunity to show off the new quoits (a hobbitish game of skill and dexterity). Since June I've been liaising with the team organising **Middle-earth Weekend 2011**, we had a good wash-up meeting for the 2010 event with the TS giving Dave Corby a bottle of Port and some book tokens. The dates are set for **21-22 May 2011** with an event theme around trees. The good news is that Viv Wilkes is chairing the event and it is mostly solvent with a small shortfall to be found by the organising team; plans for fundraising have included a table-top 'bar boot sale' at a pub in Kings Heath, quiz nights and a barn dance. Viv is also applying for some form of funding even though it requires the group formally set itself up with a Constitution and all, I've asked Pat Reynolds if she can advise in any way. Unfortunately I have been unable to attend various planning meetings. **UK Games Expo** followed shortly after MeWe in early June, we had an advert and I created some posters about Tolkien and RPGs and other games. I set up a display stall, again with banner, and Sally Kennett, Maddy Flint, and Trevor Reynolds (the TST presence made the stand look bigger) helped staff it and flog some of the TST stock including the last of the Britains figures, but thankfully not the empty boxes! Quite a few people took leaflets and postcards/bookmarks away. There was also a discussion with one of the staff about TS cos-players attending to enhance the event and I've opened discussions with the organisers for next year. Expo 2011 will be 3rd to 5<sup>th</sup> June and planning for this year's event is underway with Becky and the TS will have another stall. Then there was getting quotes and arranging production of more TS leaflets, postcards and two types of colour bookmark. **2012 Return of the Ring** has been publicised a bit by me too, so I liaised with Becky Hitchin about promoting 2012 generally, at the Festival and with the production of postcards for Aussiecon (see below), and all the new TS postcards and flyers have promotional text about 2012 on them. The leaflets carry "**2012 Return of the Ring** A Gathering of Friends celebrating Tolkien in 2012. Five days of lectures, workshops and other events, including a ceilidh, a costume

masquerade, dealers room, art show and a banquet  
**[www.returnofthering.org](http://www.returnofthering.org)**” with a shorter version on the postcards. The temporary print run of leaflets needed for UKGamesExpo had “**2012 Return of the Ring** A Gathering of Friends celebrating Tolkien in 2012 etc” on them too. Unsurprisingly I made arrangements for publicising the **2010 Seminar** in Birmingham, to the usual places and naturally enough I also posted notices about the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Seminar in Melbourne too.

The next large piece of work was a non-TS event and one that has proved problematic, the **Festival in the Shire Festival in the Shire**. Pre-event work has already been mentioned in the 2010 AGM Report and since that was written it continued with getting the registration price details and discussing how much help the TS could provide to members volunteering to help out, and the writing the advert in Amon Hen for volunteers, plus of course the event advert. I found out that the TS could send display materials to the venue, and I created and had printed display posters for the Festival and then packed up and shipped off the display stuff and freebies. The event happened as planned although the weather was unkind and attendance numbers may not have been as good as hoped even allowing for the prices. The society had a volunteer (Linda Jones) at the event who helped out at the event and put out the TS display materials. She has also reported on the event generally and provided confirmation of details. A key problem has been that when people have made criticisms of the event on the facebook page these have been removed even when they also had positive suggestions for the event’s future. This did not bode well for the TS endorsement. I spent some time keeping an eye on the comments and can circulate a large number of them if desired; certainly although some people were disappointed many were rather forgiving and certainly the academic conference was considered to have been very good. After the event the organiser wished to attend Oxonmoot as a dealer, to promote his next Festival, and with 5 weeks to go asked to have a room to put his Festival art-show and display into at Oxonmoot. He hoped that this will help draw people to Oxonmoot despite that this request came in after Day Time Event entries had closed and any promotion would occur after the ‘bookings closed’ date and that this would increase Oxonmoot costs. We fell out when he couldn’t cope with the idea that having locked the event down members of the sub-comm would go on holiday and be out of touch to discuss matters. Apparently when stating that the Society is run by volunteers in their spare time I ‘sold like a utility’. (erm what?) The art show proposed for Oxonmoot was set up to occur in Leiden with about 8 weeks in hand. This went well according to Rene van Rossenburg who hosted it, but other people say hardly anyone went, and the next Festival was announced for August 2011 and then scrapped due to money issues. Since January Mr Faith has now been talking up August 2012 as the next Festival and making rather offensive remarks.

August also involved **Aussiecon4**, the WorldCon in Melbourne. I produced flyers for the TS, Tol Harndor, & Oxonmoot that were to be printed in Melbourne. And then of course comes **Oxonmoot**. Naturally this provoked

some work in late spring and again over the summer with the usual press releases and news going out to all the usual places. A facebook event page was created and the event tweeted about. Although I failed to put out a bookings close notice as I would normally I did circulate notices about this on Twitter, faceborg, and LJ. Through a contact I heard that the film 'Born of Hope' would now not be shown at the Festival and they were looking for a venue so I passed this onto Trevor to make the arrangements and I think everyone enjoyed it. Aside from doing publicity beforehand, (and dealing with Mr Faith) and requests for flyers at the event from publishers & authors, after the showing of Born Of Hope & the Q&A session I nattered with Kate and. I asked if they were still seeking donation monies to pay the bills, with a view to getting the TS listed (which might happen on the website but not the film), and it turns out they are and they are also looking into funding another fan-film but one which is Tolkien related but not using his characters so that they could sell dvds to pay costs at the end of it. **Tolkien Reading Day 2011:** Precise Forward Planning and Year Ahead had the date confirmed to them in the Autumn, the theme is 'Tolkien's Trees' chosen to align with the UN 'International Year of Forests' but the rest of it is Becky's work.

In November with the help of Andrew McMurry and Andy Armstrong the **Tolkien Birthday Toast 2011** pages were set up followed by press releases etc. A Facebook event went up later so as not to detract from the TS pages. The server hack caused some posts to go missing but I think we ended up with 27 pages of entries and 1080 or so folk on facebook (with an awful lot of wall posts too). There were several media enquiries which I dealt with as Becky was busy with something else: Cactus TV's Daytime book Club wanted information, BBC Oxford wanted an interview pre-recorded about the Toast (and ideally someone to talk on local tv too - I asked for volunteers but had no luck, shame, so in future we might want to get a crew of 'talk on tv' volunteers around Oxford, Birmingham, & Leeds who can help Becky out at times like the Toast). BBC Coventry & Warwickshire wanted a live interview for their morning show so I did the business over the phone and we talked about Tolkien & Warwick (thanks Lynn Forest-Hill for that TLS article).

Although the above talks about the main events the following is a brief summary of highlights of the other work to give members a flavour of what has been done (there is a more detailed version of this report listing all the work done should anyone wish to see it) over the year. **2005 Souvenir Book** naturally enough the publication of the Souvenir Book elicited some work in publicising it to attendees so that those who had move in the meantime could obtain their copy and to create a flyer so recipients would know that the Proceedings were available to purchase. **Bob Blackham's Pitkin Guide:** Bob emailed about a Tolkien Guidebook he is working on for Pitkin, he is hoping to include some TS info in the text so he included a draft that I amended and beefed up, the book should be out in 2011. Pitkin then got in touch in January as they wanted information on photo and book cover reproduction copyrights and a copy of the TS badge so I picked up the job

again. **Dimitra Fimi “*Tolken race and Cultural History*”** Just before Oxonmoot I was contacted by Ben Doyle of Palgrave Macmillan about having flyers for Dimitra’s book at Oxonmoot. As well as saying yes, I suggested an advert in Amon Hen and put him in touch with AndrewB. Sadly the flyer thing didn’t happen as the day they could have printed them to ship to Oxonmoot they suffered a major network systems failure. I’ve also been asked if Heren Istarion could get a review copy of the book. **Ethan Gilsdorf “*Fantasy Freaks and Gaming Geeks*”** Ethan emailed asking if I could help promote his book by giving away 5 copies at Oxonmoot, as it is now out in paperback, and getting promotional flyers to all attendees. This was sorted, almost at the last minute, and many thanks to Lynnnn and her team of registration pack stuffers. **Dragonmeet 2010:** An A4 programme book advert was taken out by the TS and according to Marion’s report we even got a member from it. The event is for rpg, table-top, larpers, board game, players etc. **Facebook:** ‘Any Volunteer’ has continued to promote the TS and pass the word around about TS events or news including the aborted publication of ‘Wheelbarrows at Dawn’, 2012 price bargains, the Birthday Toast, and the end of an era. I spotted a new Tolkien fan group in Australia and sent them a welcome message from the TS that also mentioned Tol Harndor and the Melbourne Seminar. **Flammifer:** The TS was invited and I have written an article for the German TS magazine and provided Becky Hitchin’s name as artist the article should be appearing in the current issue. **Mythcon:** I sent Mike Foster a parcel of leaflets, postcards and bookmarks for distribution there and general use. He’s mentioned previously about distributing others already at Kalamazoo Congress on Medieval Studies in May. **Penkrige Library:** This is a mix of publicity and education as in part the library contact from 2009 would like the TS to help promote his Tolkien themed event at the start of March, whilst offering to carry our publicity materials and the projected event looks interesting. The event has been noted on Facebook and postcards & bookmarks sent. **Sarehole Mill:** One of the AOB from the MeWe 2010 wash-up was the idea of a set of gardens at the Mill. Viv Wilkes has let me know that the garden idea has been discussed some more, and asked for any suggestions for names that wouldn’t require permission from the Estate. Otherwise Mick Wilkes was going to write to the Estate to open discussions, presumably with his Deputy Lord Mayor hat on. **“The Hobbits” book:** Lynette Porter is bringing out a new book. I’ve not heard more from the publishers though since they decided to put it back until 2011. **The One Ring Game:** Over UKGamesExpo weekend I liaised between a TS member artist and the game designers for this new Tolkien roleplaying game, although it turned out they have commissioned all the art they want. **TS & ‘Public Benefit’:** Further to Martin’s hassling of the accountants and their hassling him back I produced a text explaining the public benefit the TS provides. **Waterstones Birmingham:** I was emailed by a staff member about having posters on a noticeboard in the SF &F department of the High Street store. So I sent some and some bookmarks etc. **WorldCon 2014:** Having seen the promotional fan-vid over the gamesexpo weekend I support the suggestion

for the TS having some involvement if the bid is successful. It may be useful publicity-wise too to have some involvement during the bid process but that's for others to decide. I do also not want to be the one doing publicity by then.

Throughout my years as Publicity Officer I've been helped one way or another by members willing to offer their time to promoting the Society. Thank You all! In the above I mention volunteers with the things they helped out at so I apologise if I've missed anybody out. I'm off now and leave the rest to Becky Hitchin but if any of you ever feel like helping out get in touch with her, even if it is only to man a stall for an hour or so to give other people a break.

*Ian Collier*

### ***The Post-Collier era***

I'm not sure that I feel completely qualified to add to Ian's report as yet, as much that I've done has been helped and guided by him. For his ongoing help, discussion and encouragement, I remain very grateful. As such I just mention here the few areas that haven't been touched upon above.

Our **Online presence** continues to increase. 'Any Volunteer' has continued to promote the TS and pass the word around about TS events or news including the server hack, 2012 updates and Reading Day. A\_V has 132 followers, including a good number of people who like or comment on nearly every post. The TS now has 582 followers! Recent Tweets have included 2012 rates and Reading Day.

We worked with **Penkrige Tolkien Festival** to publicise their event to our online followers on Twitter and Facebook.

Currently we're leading up to **Tolkien Reading Day**. A page had already been created on Facebook for the event (run by a fan for her own Tolkien society) so we promoted that page, with the TS Reading Day publicity added as the front of the event page. A page was added to the TS website ([http://www.tolkiensociety.org/ed/tolkienreadingday\\_2011.html](http://www.tolkiensociety.org/ed/tolkienreadingday_2011.html)) with 2011 tree-related text from Lynn Forest-Hill and Ian Collie. Press releases were sent out to media and libraries. Two requests for educational material were made on the back of the FB post, and the new page emailed out to the teachers concerned.

We've booked a stand for **UK Games Expo**, and have got a number of people volunteering to go.

*Becky Hitchin*

## ***Webmaster***

Earlier in 2010 the online booking system was not doing all that the booking officer needed of it, but software improvements made by Andrew McMurry, in consultation with everyone involved, have made it work well.

The web server was hacked in December 2010, apparently in an attempt to use it to send spam. The website was offline for several days, as was email and the mailing lists. When it was rebuilt, the kernel was upgraded, and the program which had a buffer overflow vulnerability which was exploited in the attack, was updated to the most recent version. This is protected against that form of attack. Other security measures are being implemented as time allows.

Modern software is sufficiently complex that hidden vulnerabilities cannot be guaranteed to be eliminated, though they can normally be removed very rapidly once discovered.

The longer term plan is to upgrade the whole site to the visual design and navigation structure used for the Return of the Ring section. However, Django will be used instead of php, to make longer term reduction in the work required for content updates, addition or removal of pages or sections and upgrades. In addition, more interactivity will be possible without as much work as required to provide the same functionality in php.

Django is a web framework that uses a template language for web page design, and Python for the back-end. It includes many functions that have to be explicitly written, with the consequent extra man hours, in the web page programming language that is php.

The intention is to implement an active news system as the first significant use of Django for parts of the site other than such items as entry forms or the birthday toast. People who have information appropriate for the website will be able to enter it on a web form, so that no technical knowledge will be needed. *Anyone* will be able to enter a news item for moderation, as is the case with the events page at present. It is intended that we combine the events form and page with this so that notices of important events can be highlighted on the home page.

This is almost ready, but has been stalled due to other priorities, such as dealing with the hacking attack. I hope it will be in operation long before the next AGM.

Thank-you to everyone who has helped with the website; in particular Andrew McMurry who keeps the server running and deals with the back-end software, Vicki Haines who keeps the education pages updated, and John Davis who moderates event page entries, and puts the links relating to Jessica's Corner in Amon Hen onto a page in the members section.

*Andrew Armstrong*

## ***Minutes of the Tolkien Society AGM 2010***

Meeting opened 15.02

Election of Chairman of the Meeting

Sally Kennett

Proposed: Andrew Armstrong Seconded: Alex Davidson

Thanks

The Chair recorded thanks to the trustees and to the volunteers who undertake work for the Society.

Apologies

Mike Percival, Maggie Percival, Lyn Wilshire, Matthew Vernon, Sally Vernon, Jason Finch, Pat Reynolds, Mark Eggington, Richard Sturch, Andrew Fullen, Kate Wilkins, Anke Collier

Corrections to the 2009 Minutes

“Denis Bridon” on page 22 should be “Denis Bridoux”.

Minutes to be Accepted:

Proposed: Trevor Reynolds

Seconded: Mike Towers

Matters Arising from the 2009 Minutes

None.

Report Updates

Ian Collier had distributed an update to his publicity and education reports.

Martin Smith distributed the accounts.

Trevor Reynolds reported that Oxonmoot had gone well. The college had been booked for next year and the booking form would be in the next Amon Hen.

Trevor Reynolds reported that Tolkien Society Trading now had a page on the website for ordering publications.

Phil Lloyd asked if publicity got a set amount of money to promote the Society. Ian Collier stated that funds were agreed as and when needed and ideas were tried and monitored for effectiveness. Phil Lloyd asked if any consideration had been given to tying into London 2012 events. Ian Collier stated that this could be looked into and Trevor Reynolds expressed the concern that advertising would likely be very tightly controlled to sponsors.

Reports to be accepted:

Proposed: Andrew Armstrong

Seconded: Phil Lloyd

Matters Arising

None.

Code of Conduct for Future Trustees and Officers of the Society

The Chairman noted that a Code of Conduct had been considered at the 2009 AGM to ensure the smooth running of the Society. A draft had been distributed for information. Comments were requested to be given to the Chairman or Secretary of the Society.

Level of Subscriptions for 2009-2010

It was proposed that subscription levels should not be increased.

Passed nem con.

It was noted that overseas rates may be increased in line with postage costs.

Phil Lloyd asked into providing an online subscription rate for electronic copies of Mallorn and Amon Hen. Martin Smith noted that this would entail producing a whole new rate. Mike Towers noted that the only saving on the subscription would be the cost of postage. Andrew Armstrong noted that presently the web team would not have capacity to administrate this. Andrew Wells noted that the Mythopoeic Society were introducing an

electronic publication and further discussion could be held with them. Trevor Reynolds noted this was an email PDF not an online document.

#### Election of Officers for 2009-2010

Position	Name	Proposer	Second
Chair	Sally Kennett	Julie Sinclair	Becky Hitchin
Secretary	Madeline Flint	Malcolm Lindley	Angela Gardner
Treasurer	Martin Smith	Annie Haward	John Ellison
Membership Secretary	Marion Kershaw	Stephie Coane	Ian Collier
Education Secretary	Ian Collier	Anke Collier	Andrew McMurry
Officers Without Portfolio	Andrew Wells	Martin Smith	Annie Haward
	Stephie Coane	Andrew Armstrong	John Ellison
	Ian Spittlehouse	Laura Taylor	Angela Nicholas

All officers were elected unopposed.

#### Venue of the 2011 AGM and Dinner

Cat Poole of the Three Farthing Stone Smial offered to host the next AGM in Moreton-in-Marsh.

Passed nem con.

#### 2008 Accounts

Martin Smith presented the 2008 accounts and noted that there were errata and an official copy would be provided.

2008 Accounts to be accepted.

Proposed: William Jones

Seconded: Trevor Reynolds

Martin Smith presented the 2009 accounts.

Andrew Armstrong asked why there was a reduction in funds carried forwards. This was due to the cost of the 2005 Souvenir Booklet.

Martin Smith noted that there had been a loss on currency fluctuation with the US\$ account. It was noted that the account was being held for 2012 but the majority of the balance was to be moved to the UK excepting \$6000 to retain the account.

Helen Armstrong noted that Martin Smith and Annie Haward had spent the greater part of the year sorting out the mess left by previous treasurers. It was now known where all the money was. Thanks were recorded to Martin Smith and Annie Haward.

Sean Gunn asked about the increase in postage telephone and internet costs. This was due to the postage of the 2005 Souvenir Book and Contributors' CDs.

Andrew Armstrong proposed replacing the old and heavy audiovisual kit with modern more portable versions. Martin Smith noted that there had been a significant surplus from Oxonmoot. Annie Haward noted that the cost of the PAT tester and flat speakers should be moved from Oxonmoot to general accounts.

Sean Gunn noted that committee travel costs had increased. Martin Smith noted that the volunteers were now coming from a greater distance. The Chairman added that more people were attending meetings but it was felt that it was better for the governance of the Society to have more volunteers attending the meetings than just the Trustees.

2009 Accounts to be accepted with modifications.

Proposed: Sarah Wells

Seconded: Matthew Kilburn

Any other business

Mike Percival Half-Marathon series

Mike Percival sent a presentation on the running project he had undertaken to raise money for the Tolkien Society and other charities.

**The Chairman thanked those present for attending and the meeting closed at 15.58**

### ***Constitutional Amendment for the 2011 AGM***

#### **Rationale:**

At the previous AGM it was suggested that it would be a good idea for a list of those nominated for the elected posts, (Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Education Secretary and OWPs) to be published in Amon Hen before the AGM, in the same way that constitutional amendments are. In order for this to be possible, the constitution needed to be changed, in order to bring the deadline back before the Amon Hen publication date.

While we were addressing the issue, we also wanted to formalise the current procedure for nominations, which has been in place for many years, but which has never been part of the constitution.

#### **Amendment:**

We therefore propose to change the text of section 18.5 to the following:

"Nominations for election to the Executive Committee must be made by members of the Society in writing and must be in the hands of the secretary of the Executive Committee at least 8 weeks before the annual general meeting. Each nomination must be proposed by two members of the Tolkien Society and signed by the Nominee, consenting to stand for the post. Should nominations exceed vacancies, election shall be by ballot. At least two tellers shall be appointed by the chairman of the meeting."

This would affect elections from 2012 onwards.

Proposed by:

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**Signed & Received 19/02/11**