

Liberal Democrat History Group

Annual General Meeting

6.30 p.m. Monday 1st February 2021

Online meeting, via Zoom: to register, go to the Liberal Democrat History Group website at www.liberalhistory.org.uk, and click on the event page for the 'Asquith vs Lloyd George' meeting at 7.00pm.

Agenda and calling notice

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM held on 3rd February 2020
3. Report from the Chair on activities during 2020
4. Report from the Treasurer and annual accounts
5. Report from the Membership Secretary
6. Election of Officers for 2020–21:
 - Chair
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Membership Secretary
 - Five ordinary members of the Executive Committee

Nominations, including self-nominations, may be made to the Secretary, in writing or by email (address below), at any time up until the start of the AGM.

7. Any other business

Asquith versus Lloyd George

On 7 December 1916, H.H. Asquith was replaced as Prime Minister by David Lloyd George. The resulting split between the two leaders left the Liberal Party divided until the end of the war and beyond. The party fought the next two general elections as two separate groups and the reunion that finally came, in 1923, was, in Asquith's words, 'a fiction if not a farce'.

Was the split between Asquith and Lloyd George caused by their contrasting personalities, or by substantive disagreements over management of the war? Or did their rivalry reflect deeper divisions between different Liberal traditions?

Join **David Laws** and **Damian Collins MP** to discuss the causes and consequences of the Asquith–Lloyd George rivalry. Both speakers contributed chapters to Iain Dale's new book, *The Prime Ministers: 55 Leaders, 55 Authors, 300 Years of History* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2020), David Laws on Asquith and Damian Collins on Lloyd George. Chair: **Wendy Chamberlain MP**.

7.00pm, Monday 1st February 2021 (following the History Group's AGM at 6.30pm)

Minutes of the meeting held at on 3rd February 2020, National Liberal Club

1. Present

Those signing the attendance sheet were: Malcolm Baines, Bryn Barden, Caroline Boileau, Hugh Boileau, Matthew Bryant, Wendy Chamberlain, Meelia Chester, Soon Yeng Chiam, David Cloke, Craig Cross, John Death, Leslie Dubow, Cathy Erasmus, Paul Fox, Jon Gertler, Anthony Greville, Julian Heather, Andrea Hertz, Desmond Hillary, Helen Hobhouse, P J Hofford, David Hughes, Simon Hughes, Jonathan Hunt, Simon James, Roger Jenking, Michael Kandiah, Tony Little, Dennis Loretto, John Macrory, Derek McAuley, Sheila McGuirk, York Membery, John Mercer, Andrew Milton, Patrick Mitchell, Michael Mullaney, Brian Orrell, Andrew Pinnock, Chris Read, Jon Roberts, Paul Rogers, Anthony Rowlands, Chris Scott, John Shipley, Neil Stockley, Cec Tallack, Keith Taffs, Nigel Taylor, Victoria Trelinska, David Tully, Jonathan Wallace, Rob Wheway, , Michael Woodland and Paul Young – 55 Attendees.

2. Apologies

Apologies had been received from: David Dutton, Mark Greenfield, Duncan Brack, Keith House, Lionel King, Graham Lippiatt, David Rogers, Michael Steed and Charles Welchman.

3. Minutes of AGM 2019

Accepted

4. Matters Arising

None

5. Chair's Report

The Chair thanked members for attending and the members of the executive for their work during the year, particularly Andrew Pinnock for stepping in as membership secretary and Neil Stockley who was stepping down as meetings organiser. He moved his report, which had been circulated with the papers for the AGM, highlighting the meetings held during the previous year on Gladstone's first government, the Liberal contribution to the development of the NHS and the survival of Liberalism in Yorkshire; the ongoing work of the Journal and the continued development of the website and the Group's social media presence. The Chair's report was accepted.

6. Report by the Treasurer

The Treasurer introduced the accounts which had been circulated at the meeting. In particular, he noted that it had been decided that the subscription rates did not yet need to increase. The accounts were approved. The Treasurer formally moved that Andrew Thurnburn and Co be the Group's accountants. This was accepted.

7. Report from Membership Secretary:

Andrew Pinnock moved the membership secretary's report contained in the papers for the meeting. The report was noted.

8. Elections

The following were elected to the Committee unopposed: Chair: Tony Little; Secretary: David Cloke; Treasurer: Paul Fox; Membership Secretary: Andrew Pinnock; Journal Editor: Duncan Brack; Website: Chris Millington; Meetings Organiser: n/a; Conference Organiser: Ruth Polling; Ordinary Members: Patrick Mitchell and Neil Stockley. Co-options: Russell Deacon; York Membery, James Moore and Gianni Sarra.

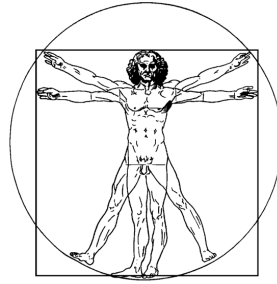
The Chair noted that there were a number of roles that could be undertaken that weren't covered at present if members were interested.

9. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Liberal Democrat History Group Annual General Meeting

Chair's Report For the year 2020



The advent of the coronavirus epidemic has accelerated many trends and this applies as much to modest organisations such as the History Group as to major companies and governments. But, while most consequences of the diseases have been woeful, some have had a positive impact.

The most notable consequences of the virus have been our inability to hold physical meetings or to organise fringe meetings and exhibit in person at the Liberal Democrat conference. The beneficial side effect has been that our virtual meetings, through Zoom, have been widely attended and enabled us to draw our audiences from across the UK rather than, as so often, from those who live in the vicinity of London or near Federal conference venues.

In the short term the financial effects have also helped as the costs of organising events have fallen more than membership revenues. Our experience of the virtual LD federal conference, which was shared by other organisations, was that while the fringe was successful the exhibition was not. Consequently we lost our best opportunity for recruiting new members.

In the longer term this is not sustainable and the Committee has been increasing outreach as much as possible through Twitter and Facebook.

We are seeking ways of better managing membership subscriptions online. This will be a gradual process and we will continue to utilise a paper-based system for those members who do not have ready access to computers.

As a first step we have been upgrading our website and this is currently being tested. We hope it will go live early in the New Year and that members will like the redesigned pages. The new website will enable us to add a new

membership module and a better 'shop' for our publications.

We are also conscious of the environmental costs of our products and we intend to encourage members to subscribe to the *Journal of Liberal History* electronically, while retaining the printed version for those who prefer. As with the website this will involve the purchase of new software and will require a redesign of the *Journal* to allow it to be read more easily on screen. This is likely to take time but we will ensure members are advised of progress.

Although the Black Lives Matter campaigns began in the United States the injustices that were protested against had resonance here in the UK. Many British institutions have been looking not only at their current practices but also their pasts.

The Liberal Democrats have roots going back to the seventeenth century, with Whig and Liberal administrations dominating government for much of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the periods in which Britain acquired and ruled the world's largest empire.

It is inevitable that well known historic figures associated with the party will be criticised as part of the re-evaluation now going on and that the Liberal Democrats will want to reflect on that past. As a group dedicated to the promotion of study of all aspects of British Liberalism, the Group are anxious that this debate is balanced, well informed and not emotionally driven. Over-simplification and rejection of the past do not appear to us to be the answer. But, so far, the balance of our work has been largely domestic. We would like to encourage further study of the relationships between Liberalism and Empire, including the reactions of the colonised.

Meetings

The last physical meeting we organised was last year's AGM, with David Steel and John Curtice discussing the 1979 general election. The planned spring conference fringe in York was cancelled at the last minute but the work of preparing for it was not lost, as we used the topic of the 2019 General Election for our first, well attended, Zoom meeting in the summer.

The technology loses some of the atmosphere and intimacy of a real meeting but allows for experimentation. The Group gratefully accepted the invitation of the Liberal Democrats to organise a virtual hustings for the leadership candidates where Sir Ed Davey and Layla Moran talked and answered questions from a panel on their heroes from history. For those unable to attend, the presentations were carried in the summer edition of the *Journal*.

The National Liberal Club extended an invitation to the group for a meeting on one of the first Liberal MPs of BAME origins, Dadabhai Naoroji, where the speaker Dinya Patel spoke to us from his home base in Mumbai. Without lockdown this possibility is unlikely to have occurred to us and opens up the possibility of other future international speakers.

The meeting following the AGM will be on the rivalry between Asquith and Lloyd George and the speakers will be David Laws and Damian Collins MP, who wrote chapters on these two premiers for a new book, *The Prime Ministers* edited by Iain Dale, to which two committee members also contributed.

We are planning a meeting on the revival of Liberalism under Jo Grimond for the virtual LD spring conference.

Journal of Liberal History

Despite some initial fears, publication of the *Journal* has continued as normal, if not always to the initial planned schedule. The special issue on Liberalism and Radicalism in the early nineteenth century has been delayed by that bane of an editor's life, the dilatory author. However it will happen this spring.

I hope you will agree that the standard of articles in the past year has remained at the highest level. We were particularly pleased to include the article on the discovery of two Whig/Liberal politicians, each named Henry Redhead Yorke, who had an Afro-Caribbean origin.

As has become traditional we have been able to present an analysis of the most recent general election and also carried an extensive interview with Jo Swinson.

Female Liberals have again featured prominently and Lloyd George probably more than we would have anticipated.

In keeping with the emerging trend to look at the past from wider perspectives we intend that the next two special issues will be on Liberals and the American Civil War and Liberals and Empire. These will take some time but authors wishing to contribute are asked to get in touch with the editor.

Publications

Publications and their sale have been a casualty of the pandemic. With no physical conferences to attend, we have postponed any new publications but the existing publications are all still available from the website.

Thanks

The work of the group is carried out by a wide range of people from the authors of *Journal* articles and speakers and chairs at meetings to the Treasurer and Membership Secretary. I would like, on behalf of members to thank them all. I would particularly like to thank the members of the committee. The pandemic has meant that we have all had to find new ways of working remotely to ensure that we continue to provide the service members expect.

While drafting this report, we were advised of the passing of Roy Douglas. Until recently Roy had been a member of the *Journal's* editorial board and for many his work will have been their introduction to Liberal history. He will be much missed.

Tony Little

December 2020

**LIBERAL DEMOCRAT HISTORY GROUP
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

	2020	2019
	£	£
INCOME		
Membership Renewals	10,440	10,060
New Memberships	1,475	1,755
	<u>11,915</u>	<u>11,815</u>
Donations	708	870
Sales	1,564	2,581
Royalties	54	35
Bank Interest	89	96
Advertising	-	50
	<u>14,330</u>	<u>15,447</u>
 EXPENDITURE		
Journal Printing	2,717	3,261
Journal DTP & Sub-editing	2,540	2,610
Journal Mailing	4,035	3,947
Conference Meetings & Other Events	449	2,639
Conference Stalls	350	557
Website	474	149
Membership Admin	89	140
Publications	134	740
Publications Postage	363	200
Bank Charges	136	111
Sundry Expenditure	3	44
	<u>11,290</u>	<u>14,398</u>
SURPLUS FOR YEAR	<u><u>3,040</u></u>	<u><u>1,049</u></u>

**LIBERAL DEMOCRAT HISTORY GROUP
BALANCE SHEET
30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

	2020	2019
	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash at Bank		
Current	109	285
Deposit	16,000	11,500
PayPal	-	34
Sub-total	16,109	11,819
Debtors	111	833
Payments in Advance	572	-
Total Current Assets	16,792	12,652
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Receipts in Advance	(760)	(1,225)
Trade Creditors	(2,059)	(494)
Sub-total	(2,819)	(1,719)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	13,973	10,933
Represented by:		
ACCUMULATED FUNDS		
Balance at 1 October	10,933	9,884
Surplus in Year	3,040	1,049
Accumulated Funds	13,973	10,933

Paul J Fox CPFA - Hon Treasurer

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT

We have examined, without carrying out an audit, the above Balance Sheet and attached Income & Expenditure Account prepared from the books and records of the Liberal Democrat History Group, and are satisfied that they are in accordance with those books and records.

ANDREW THURBURN & Co
Chartered Accountants
38 Tamworth Road
Croydon
Surrey CR0 1XU

15-Dec-20