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**Annual General Meeting**

**2.00 pm Saturday 20th November 2021**

Virtual Meeting by Zoom

**Agenda**

1. Welcome: AF welcomed all the members warmly
2. Board members present: Alison Findlay (AF, Chair); Maria Shmygol (MS, Web and

Comms); Chris Green (CG, Education); Eleanor Rycroft (ER, Honorary Fellowships); José Pérez-Díez (JPD, Membership); Mark Thornton Burnett (MTB, Performance and Media); Paul Edmondson (PE, SBT Member); Simon Smith (SS, Shakespeare Institute); Thea Buckley (TB, Minuting Secretary)

Apologies: Lisa Hopkins, Karen Eckersall, Phil Bowen, Sue Best

1. Matters Arising from the last meeting: All approved the minutes
2. Chair’s Report:
3. Board changes since last year:

AF welcomed SS, Shakespeare Inst Trustee. SS is a non-elected Trustee like LH, representing the Journal and PE, representing the SBT. AF expressed that we are all very glad to have his expertise to inform our activities.

Deputy Treasurer EG has stepped down; ably, CH has taken over as Treasurer. AF offered thanks to EG for excellent work in managing our account with Co-op Bank and advising on creating an annual budget so we can make secure financial projections.

BGH, Web & Comms Officer has also stepped down and handed this role to MS. AF noted we owe huge thanks to BGH for his work in developing the BSA’s digital interface -- including organisation of an on-site system for conference registration and the Herculean task of continuous management of our outdated site. AF invited members to put messages in chat to pass on to BGH; members thanked him for his sterling work.

1. AF announced two new Board trustee positions, created after consultation amongst Board Members; these have been advertised via the BSA website and bulletin. So different constituencies are represented, the Board warmly welcomes applications from any BSA member both UK and international. We particularly welcome applications from disabled applicants, those from BAME backgrounds, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. People can self-nominate – nominations due by 10 December 2021. This is an exciting time to be joining the Board due to forthcoming live and online events.
2. Following the passing of Professor Michael Hattaway, the BSA donated £200 towards the transportation of his books bequeathed to Dr Veronica Popescu and the English Dept at the University of Iasi, Romania, which until now has had a severe shortage of Shakespeare-related teaching resources. To mark the books’ arrival, we are planning an online international symposium with colleagues from Iasi.
3. **Treasurer’s Report** (CH)

Annual Accounts 2019/2020: income dropped from £36,085 to £7,891 but this was only due to the absence of the regular on-site conference with associated BSA conference fees. Related costs dropped simultaneously; did not impact the Income & Expense Account or Cash Flow.

This is in line with implemented BSA policy, where any costs related to on-site conferences are to be paid only from received conference fees from BSA members and any other directly related conference income.

Over last year, expenditure included journal costs (*Shakespeare* and *Teaching Shakespeare*), website maintenance costs, fellowship costs, bank charges & travel and accountant costs.

Our continued policy is to have unrestricted and undesignated funds in the BSA reserves able to meet 3-6 months’ expenditure. This ideally ensures continuance of the charity’s activities through reserves sufficient to meet significant drops in funding or unexpected expenses, for some time while additional fundraising avenues are considered. This reserve level has been maintained all year.

Unrelated to the 2019/2020 accounts, in 2021 legal regulations required the redevelopment of the BSA website. Both our financial buffer and a generous £1,900 gift from *Shakespeare*’s editors enabled us to redesign the website while retaining the designated 3-6 months’ reserves. Our financial position therefore remains solid and meets BSA requirements.

Finally, in 2021, our assistant treasurer, Elizabeth Glynn, has stepped down. Board members Alison Findlay and Lisa Hopkins have agreed to take up her tasks. CH ended his report by thanking our former asst treasurer, whose priceless assistance helped him settle in his role as Treasurer.

1. Membership (JPD)

**Membership figures**

Total number of current members for 2020/21 as of today: **254**

**FULL PRICE MEMBERS         119 members** 46.8%

49 with journal

70 without journal

**CONCESSIONS                        52 members** 20.5%

            23 with journal

            29 without journal      

**EDUCATION MEMBERS           49 members** 19.3%

            28 with journal

            21 without journal

**THEATRE PRACTITIONERS     34 members** 13.4%

            9 with journal

            25 without journal

Gift Aid members:  **97** 38%

Journal subscribers: **106** 42%

Members in 27 countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Swaziland, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

1. Membership figures: healthy increase due to the conference.
2. Membership year to start 1 January from now on.
3. Journal subscriptions deadline to change with membership year.

JPD noted in closing, that we might be the British Shakespeare Association but we are incredibly international!

1. Website and Communications (MS)

MS was happy to report the BSA’s new website is now live. Part of the old one had broken down and could not be updated, and it was running an old version of PHP. So a new site was needed to fulfil our digital objectives in being a hub for our membership and delivering content both to our membership and to the public. MS thanked AF, CH, JPD, and BGH for their help with the new website project, and she thanked the editors of the BSA’s *Shakespeare*journal for their generous donation towards the new site. MS reported the process of seeking a developer began in May, and ultimately a new WordPress site was commissioned from Agency for Good, who’ve provided an excellent service. MS shared her screen to show the new website and its ‘News’ and new ‘Blog’ feature, encouraging BSA members to send in news items and blogs, and the new ‘Contact Us’ form, allowing users to select inquiry topics. MS assured that the site’s domain name, and members’ usernames and passwords, remain the same. MS invited members to contact her via the Webmaster address with any events or projects, submissions, papers, etc. so she can put news and blog items on the website, and she also pointed out the contact form to get in touch about different submissions or issues.

MS mentioned further digital initiatives: see **Events**. Recordings are available to view online if we log into the members area.

MS noted that BSA is recruiting a new Web and Comms Deputy Trustee to help with digital initiatives (particularly events and Blog) and offered to field questions from prospective applicants.

MS concluded by saying the online conference in August worked very well by Zoom, with BSA members joining from all over the world.

1. AF invited CG, Education Committee Chair, to update us on Education activities

* Re-established Education Committee members are: Mary Carey (Primary), Karen Eckersall, Chris Green (Chair), Wendy Lennon, Myfanwy Marshall (*Teaching Shakespeare*), Helen Mears, James Stredder, and Fiona Williams. The group has already met three times. CG expressed his thanks to all members of the committee for their important work. Meetings so far have focused on: active and creative approaches to teaching Shakespeare; supporting teachers and lecturers (particularly during the current health crisis); promoting the teaching of Shakespeare in schools and colleges when the Arts are under threat in that context; supporting home schooling; establishing links between sectors (Primary, Secondary, Colleges and Universities) for the teaching of Shakespeare; EDI matters.
* After following the appropriate process, a new *Teaching Shakespeare* Editor, Myfanwy Marshall, has been appointed. We are very grateful to Sarah Olive for everything she has done for the magazine (and for the BSA generally) over the last decade and more. We are delighted by the new appointment and wish her luck. A recent guest-edited edition has appeared, and two new editions are in the pipeline. The magazine will be online-only from now on.
* The BSA site Education pages have featured a number of resources and links aimed at supporting teachers and lecturers during the current health crisis. These are divided between those accessible freely / only via password-protected BSA members’ areas.
* There was significant increased involvement by teachers in the summer BSA conference – with at least two major events focused on this sector.
* The BSA’s first ‘live’ post-pandemic event for teachers is currently being planned and will be announced for early 2022 via the BSA website.
* Contributions to the BSA blog with a teaching focus are invited and may be submitted via the ‘Contact’ section of the new website.
* CG expressed his grateful thanks to everyone involved in the Education work of the BSA during the past challenging year.

1. On Events, AF reported on behalf of KE

* **5-7 August 2021** BSA annual conference, Shakespeare In/Action, online this year. AF gave special thanks and congratulations to the rapidly-convened conference team (especially MS, LH, ER) for their smooth organising of this year’s event.
* **6November 2021**: we had another event organised by JPD with Perry Mills, Disguised Dukes, engaging with a play by Marston alongside Shakespeare’s *Measure For Measure*, and featuring Edward’s Boys production of Marston’s *Fawn* along with Q&A, which was very successful.
* **11 November 2021:**‘The Imaginative Flows of *Shakespeare's Maritime* *Dream*’. Roundtable with Barabara Bono and Maria Horner, chaired by Steve Mentz; recording available on the BSA website in the Members’ Area.
* **11November 2021-30 April 2022:** Shakespeare’s Library: Shakespeare’s Sources and Texts at the Special Collections – BSA Member Dr Christina Wolf shares an invitation to a free in-person exhibition at the University of Leicester, David Wilson Library Special Collections – see our website for details. Please note the online version of the exhibition here: <https://leicester.omeka.net/exhibits/show/introduction>

**Forthcoming events:**

January (date to be confirmed) Professor Peter Smith – online lecture ‘“Uneasy Lies the Head”: Michael Almereyda’s Halloween *Cymbeline*’

February – Veronica Popescu and Julia Milica will run an online Shakespeare symposium in honour of Professor Michael Hattaway, from the Department at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi

There will be a larger event in Summer 2022, following the success of the 2021 online conference. AF welcomed ideas for this.

The BSA Conference Team is already planning ahead for the BSA conference in 2023 – 400th anniversary of the First Folio publication – with colleagues in Liverpool. AF invited Dr Esme Miskimmon and Professor Elspeth Graham to provide more details, and EM addressed members, introducing the 2023 BSA Conference theme of Relocating Shakespeare. EM elaborated that this ties in with the completion of the Shakespeare North Playhouse in Knowsley, and that in addition to other Liverpool institutions hopefully, the Everyman and Playhouse would be theatrical bases for the conference. They concluded by reading aloud the introductory brief to the conference.

AF announced on behalf of KE, that the BSA welcomes applications for funding to support small events – details can be found on the BSA website.

1. Performance and Media (MTB)

**Lockdown Shakespeare:**

*Shakespeare Bulletin*, 38.3 (2020) – a special issue edited by Peter Kirwan and Erin Sullivan on many recent lockdown Shakespeare productions (Blackfriars Playhouse, The Show Must Go Online, Brighton Dome Studio, Big Telly, Shakespeare ZA, etc.)

**Theatre:**

*Hamlet* (dir. Greg Hersov, 2021). Til 13 Nov, Cush Jumbo as Hamlet. ‘Spirited away ... the Perfect Prince’ (*Observer*, 10 Oct); ‘spare new Hamlet with modern trappings’ (*TLS*, 15 Oct). On Joseph Marcell/Polonius, ‘From Bel-Air to Elsinore’ *Guardian, Arts* section 28 Oct, 8-9.

*The Tragedy of Macbeth* (Yaël Farber, 2021). Almeida, til 27 Nov. ‘A howl from the heart ... Saoirse Ronan thrills’ (*Observer*, 17 Oct); ‘the play ... with some canny interventions’ (*Mail on Sunday*, 17 Oct); ‘Bold and Beautiful’ (*Times*, 15 Oct); ‘Blazes into Life’ (*Guardian*, 15 Oct); ‘Radically redeeming the fallen world’ (*TLS*, 22 Oct).

*A Merchant of Venice* (dir. Bill Alexander, 2021). Playground Theatre. Cast of six; theme, tormented love. See: [info@theplaygroundtheatre.london](mailto:info@theplaygroundtheatre.london). Til 4 Dec. Note the title change!

*The Tempest* (dir. Andy Arnold, 2021). Tron Theatre, Glasgow. A Cop26-inspired production: ‘dreamy and fluid’ (*The Guardian*, 1 Nov). Til 13 Nov.

*The Tempest* (dir. Jolena Flett, 2021). Southbank Playhouse, Belfast. The leads and Caliban are gender-swapped <https://www.southbankplayhouse.com/> Til 20 Nov.

*The Tempest* (dir. Tom Littler, 2021). Jermyn Street Theatre; Michael Pennington. Til 22 Dec

**Cinema:**

*The Tragedy of Macbeth* (dir. Joel Cohen, 2021): ‘sublime noir nightmare’ (*Guardian*, 25 Sep)

**Television**:

*Succession / King Lear*, Season 3, Sky Atlantic. Theme: madness of Logan Roy / Lear.

**Radio:**

*The Tempest* with Ian McDiarmid (BBC Radio 3, 7 Nov)

**Work by Media and Performance Committee members**:

Mark Thornton Burnett’s series ‘Shakespeare and Adaptation’ (Bloomsbury Academic) releases four books this year: [www.bloomsbury.com/uk/series/shakespeare-and-adaptation/](http://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/series/shakespeare-and-adaptation/)

**Alasdair Craig**: Working with a large range of young people (and teachers) at the Globe on a project funded by Deutsche Bank to give secondary school age young people access to the current revival of Sean Holmes’ production of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (and associated off site workshops). See [Playing Shakespeare with Deutsche Bank | Learn](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.shakespearesglobe.com%2Flearn%2Fsecondary-schools%2Fplaying-shakespeare-with-deutsche-bank%2F&data=04%7C01%7CMark.Burnett%40qub.ac.uk%7Cc2b21f1f65734ea5c3f808d987f3a157%7Ceaab77eab4a549e3a1e8d6dd23a1f286%7C0%7C0%7C637690302897646498%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=NJMT0rBmMpuNv%2FZ8MP1g4GK13qMKLtF0dZWDwIvdNxU%3D&reserved=0) (www.shakespearesglobe.com/learn/secondary-schools/playing-shakespeare-with-deutsche-bank/#:~:text=Playing%20Shakespeare%20with%20Deutsche%20Bank%20is%20Shakespeare%27s%20Globe%20flagship%20project,the%20open%20air%20Globe%20Theatre).

**Terra Nova, Belfast:** Ongoing project on 15c Europe, important figures include Black Tudor musician John Blanke. To be involved, contact Terra Nova directly: [www.terranovaproductions.net/15-century](http://www.terranovaproductions.net/15-century)

**The Willow Globe**: Workshops on ‘Have-a-Go Shakespeare’; Ongoing community work on *Cymbeline*: (<https://www.shakespearelink.org.uk/community>)

**Coming soon:**

*Macbeth* (dir. Sam Gold, 2022). *Macbeth* at the Lyceum Theatre, Broadway, with Daniel Craig, Ruth Negga. Presented by the James Bond Producers! From 29 March.

1. Honorary Fellowships (ER)

Honorary Fellowships were today accepted graciously by actor **Adjoa Andoh**, and **Professor Andrew Gurr**, theatre historian and lead academic advisor to the Globe. Both accepted their awards, streamed over Zoom, and were in conversation with Alison Findlay before a highly appreciative audience of BSA members. Another Fellowship cycle is thus complete.

Letty Garcia is not in a position to join the sub-committee; ER is still seeking someone to join us.

ER at the next Board Meeting would like to revisit the idea of an Innovation Award. ER pointed out that the pandemic has produced a lot of innovation and we could think about adding an award to the BSA.

AF thanked ER and reiterated that any suggestions for nominations for honorary fellows for next year were welcome and to please send these to ER and the committee to consider – performers/practitioners, academics, teachers all are equally valid members to be nominated.

**Action: ER to prepare a proposal and AF to add this to the agenda for the next Board Meeting in January.**

**Action: members to consider nominating or self-nominating to join the committee.**

1. Journal report (LH, presented by AF):

The special issue on ‘Shakespeare and the Jews’, guest-edited by Coen Heijes and Sabine Schuelting, is progressing well.

The deadline for Rob Stagg’s special issue on versification has just passed and he seems pleased with what he’s received.

A special issue promised for October has failed to materialise but we’ve postponed it and been able to put together a replacement.

Taylor and Francis made the special issue on ‘Shakespeare and Race’ freely available for a time, for which we’re grateful.

The journal editors had a separate but related correspondence and meeting with Farah KC about the letter sent to journals by the Executive Board of RaceB4Race. We take many of their points, and we are confident that our use of peer review is not exclusionary and does protect standards.

The editors continue to receive submissions for *Shakespeare*, while struggling a bit with the performance section in the absence of live theatre.  We have also lost a proposed special issue due to contributors’ ongoing inability to access library resources, although the issue may be resurrected at a future point once access resumes.

AF pointed out that if anyone follows MTB’s suggestions or watches any of the online material, a review would be very welcome for the *Shakespeare*.

AF remarked that although *Shakespeare* is affiliated with the BSA, it is not run from the BSA website but by the Taylor & Francis publishers’ website. She noted that perhaps MS could provide a link from the new website for those wishing to make submissions.

**Action: MS to add link for journal accordingly**

13 Any other business

1) PE announced a series of live readings of Shakespeare’s complete works in Stratford-Upon-Avon next year, to raise part funds to restore the Shakespeare statue gifted by David Garrick in 1769. George Pragnell has committed match funding, with a total needed of £45,000. Actors Janet Suzman and Harriet Walter are already lined up to read the roles of Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra* and Rosalind in *As You Like It*, respectively, during the first weekend of 5-6 March. Readings will be held in the Town Hall ballroom from noon to midnight, 1-12 March and are bookable bookable online from early December. Readings are open to all as audience; registrants who sign up to read a part need to commit £25 in sponsorship. PE hoped it would bring communities together, with it involving schools, the Shakespeare Institute, local churches, RSC, local actors, community groups, etc.

2) MS raised the point that perhaps the BSA Board might consider drafting a specific policy for the website that addresses sexual harassment, to go along with the BSA’s EDI policy and following the same kind of protocols that other comparable organisations follow in implementing those policies. AF said this sounded like an excellent idea, suggested looking at the SAA for wording, and thanked MS for raising the issue.

**Action: MS to draft a proposal and bring this to the January meeting.**

3) ER mentioned that she and MS are co-editing a special issue of *Shakespeare* on Shakespeare in Action and that the CFP is out with a 28 February deadline for abstracts submission. ER invited all to submit abstracts and spread the word.

In closing, AF thanked all for their remarks, suggestions, and attendance.The meeting ended promptly at 3.45pm