

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Arab Horse Society held on 16th April 2016 at 1.30pm at
The Fold, Bransford, Worcester, WR6 5JB**

Present:

Chairman:	Mrs A Dixon		
Vice Chairman:	Mrs J Lowe		
Treasurer:	Mr A McLeod		
Council:	Mrs J Armstrong	Mrs A Brown	Miss K Gore
	Mrs C Kokta	Mrs N Meredith	Mrs J White

Attendees:

Mrs Z Atkinson	Mrs C Bennett	Mrs M Bint	Miss A Bourne
Miss B Brigg	Mrs BC Cary	Mr S Constable	Mrs P Grant
Mrs F Grant-Chivers	The Hon F Guinness	Miss F Harper	Miss U Harper
Mrs C Hartley	Mr A Knott	Mrs FC Leng	Mrs S Melia
Mrs J Parsons	Miss J Parsons	Mrs JHL Phillips	Mrs S Plant
Mrs G Rose	Mrs G Smith	Miss J Sorensen	Mrs C Sussex
Mr P Upton	Miss J Woodward	Mrs J Woodward	Miss M Woodward-Ash

1. To approve the Notice Convening the Meeting

The Chairman, Mrs Annette Dixon, read the Notice Convening the Meeting at 1.30pm.

1.2 Before formal business was addressed the Chairman asked for a minute's silence to remember members who had passed away. The Society had been notified of Mr M Mohammed, Mr S Roebuck, Mrs H Moss, Mrs S Passat, Miss Bowditch, Mrs G Lancaster and Mrs L Salmon.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Mrs R Archer	Miss E Archer	Mrs F Atkinson	Mr P Atkinson
Lady Beaverbrook	Mrs CK Beckett	Mrs R Bertram	Mrs P Bowles
Mrs J Bridges	Ms J Clark	Mrs I Compton	Mrs J Court
Mrs A Doxey	Mrs B Durey	Mrs D Godwin	Mr B Gore
Mrs H Gore	Mrs A Hedley	Miss N Hudson	Mrs G Hunt
Mrs V Hull	Mrs P Kettles	Mr R Kettles	Mrs S Kilgour
Mrs L Lidbury	Mrs S Little	Mr P Lowe	Mrs M MacPherson
Mrs E Mann	Miss S Mattocks	Mrs N Mellor	Mrs T Miller-Burrage
Miss K Murray	Mrs P Shenton	Mrs M Sweet	Mrs D Volpe
Mrs D Whittome	Mr E Woodward	Mrs J Woodward	

3. To note the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on the 18th April 2015

3.1 Mr P Upton asked for a correction of the minutes 3.2.2. as this was not what he had said. Delete "and he would ensure it did". Replace with "ask for assurances from Council that members would have the opportunity to have a say – unlike the issue over the sale of Windsor House."

3.2 Miss J Sorensen proposed the minutes and Mr P Upton seconded. The minutes were approved.

4. To consider any matters arising from the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting

4.1 The Chairman asked if there were any matters arising. There were none.

5. To receive the Report of Council and the Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2015.

5.1 The Chairman thanked members of Council and Committees, all of whom are volunteers, for their hard work over the year. The support of the Governors is also appreciated, as is the dedication of the staff in the office.

5.2 The Chairman announced that there had been some staff changes at the Arab Horse Society offices. Ros Ward had made the decision to retire after nine years with us and Tracy Phizaklea was moving to Cornwall. Karin Swanson takes up the position of Assistant Registrar and Karen Farris is now taking care of transfers.

5.3 The Chairman invited Mr A McLeod, Treasurer, to report on the accounts.

5.3.1 Mr A McLeod reported that the Sale of Windsor House and the purchase of the new offices at Agriculture House resulted in a surplus of monies which have been invested in medium and long term secure fixed investment. Of the £600K surplus £375K is invested at an average of 2.5% interest for a five year period and the balance on shorter terms. These companies are all A rated and gave a very good interest rate compared to current offers.

5.3.2 Mr F Guinness asked the Treasurer how the Society is placed financially for the future. Mr A McLeod replied that the new owners of Windsor House have spent £300K on essential repairs and refurbishment so it was the right decision to sell and move to new offices which are modern and are more economical to run. Investments will bring in £15K per annum to help with income and to maintain break-even finances. Agriculture House has better facilities with everything under one roof and with a possibility to let office space.

5.3.3 Mr F Guinness said his question had not been answered. Mr A McLeod said that we operate on the basis that we are always conscious of costs in relation to the available income and that we work within the agreed budgets. It is difficult to do a five year financial plan and any income problems would be addressed as they arose, as it is difficult to know exactly what income may come in.

5.3.4 Mrs A Dixon said a breakeven balance had been achieved this year. Mr A McLeod said the accounts had gone from four years of losses to a breakeven situation. Costs had been covered and there was a slight surplus. He said all elements and committees of the society were under pressure financially.

5.3.5 Mr P Upton asked if costs could be reduced as registrations, exports, imports, stallion licencing and membership were all down. Mr A McLeod said there had been a loss in the years 2010-2013, 2013-2014 had shown a surplus and 2014-2015 slightly over breakeven. He said membership numbers had been falling until the new membership levels were introduced which had helped to stabilise the overall number of members, however there was a drop in income due to a cheaper membership option, as everyone was facing financial restraints.

5.3.6 Mrs J Armstrong said costs have been reduced. Cost saving has been applied wherever possible. Council is conscious that fewer horses are being bred. This is a good thing. Cutting costs have come into line with this. The investment monies increase the income. The possible office rent would increase the income. The main role of Council is to run the finances and the Committees deal with the other items. The number of staff is less than in the past with Committees now undertaking some of the office work. It is important for the Society to still maintain a service and the AHS standard should continue to be a benchmark for other societies.

5.3.7 Mr P Upton asked if the expenditure on page 21 which was up by £2K included the cost of moving. Mr A McLeod said the cost of moving included £14K estate agent's commission and £16K to move the office equipment, telephone system and computer system and to repair the badly damaged library furniture and to rebuild it into the new library. The cost was less than having to relocate further afield as had been suggested, as this would have been more expensive due to the cost of staff redundancies.

5.3.8 Miss U Harper asked about the investment institutions that take on charities. Would the interest be paid annually and would the £15K drop after 2 years. Mrs J Armstrong said it is best to have a range of investments so that all eggs are not in one basket. Mr A McLeod said the interest rates available now have dropped to 1.6% so the fixed rate achieved is a good deal.

5.4 Mrs S Plant asked if Council was looking to buy Agricultural House in the future. Mr A McLeod said it has been purchased freehold for £285K. Other investments held by the Society had matured and these have also been put into the recent investments.

5.4.1 Mrs J Armstrong said the new offices are in a modern purpose built building with a better working environment for staff in the 21st century. Windsor House had served its purpose. Mr A McLeod added that the archive room is safe and air conditioned and secure. There is plenty of parking with nine parking spaces. Mrs J Armstrong thought an Open Day for members on a date to be arranged would be beneficial, but members were more than welcome to visit the premises at any time.

5.5 There being no further questions Mrs C Sussex proposed and Miss F Harper seconded that the Report of Council and Accounts for the year to 31st December 2015 were approved. The meeting agreed.

5.6 The Chairman thanked Mr A McLeod and Linda Nicholson, Finance Officer, for all their hard work on the accounts.

6. To approve the appointment of James Cowper as Independent Examiner to the Society.

6.1 Mr A McLeod said that the move to an independent examiner had saved £3.5K, and recommended that it was continued.

6.2 Mr F Guinness proposed and Mrs J Phillips seconded that James Cowper be appointed. The meeting agreed.

7. To announce the name of the 2016/2017 Honorary President

7.1 The Chairman thanked the retiring Honorary President Mrs J Phillips for going from East to West and North to South and doing a splendid job of promoting the Arab Horse Society and the Breed.

7.2 Mrs Joan Woodward who was due to be Honorary President had unfortunately had a fall and was disappointed to have to withdraw from her position due to a broken hip.

7.2.1 The 2016/2017 President elect, Mrs Barbara Cary, has stepped into the breach and taken up the position of Honorary President.

7.3 Mrs J Phillips thanked members for a wonderful year that she had thoroughly enjoyed .

7.4 The Chairman presented the Honorary President's badge of office to Mrs B Cary who said she was very grateful to have the honour of the position and is looking forward to enjoying it.

8. To announce the names of the new Council Members and the names of the new Direct Elects to the society.

8.1 The Chairman announced the names of the new Council members. To retire in 2019 are Mrs J Armstrong , Mrs A Dixon, Mrs N Meredith, Mrs J Phillips. To retire in 2018 are Miss K Gore, Mrs C Kokta, Mrs J White. To retire in 2017 are Mrs F Grant-Chivers and Mrs S Melia. Directly elected to Stud Book and Registration Committee are Mrs F Leng and Mrs C Sussex, to Shows and Events Committee Miss F Harper and Mrs N Stocks-Mellor and to Public Relations and Marketing is Mrs I Compton.

9. To announce the name of the 2016/2017 Honorary President Elect

9.1 The Chairman explained that due to Mrs B Cary taking up the Honorary President position there would be no Honorary President Elect this year.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 The Chairman announced there were two written questions that had been received prior to the meeting and that these should be addressed.

10.1.1 Question from Mrs J Bridges – Apart from the contractual and statutory entitlements (e.g. notice and pay in lieu), how did Council recognise Mrs Maggie Court's long and loyal service by way of a gift and when was it presented?

What happened to the donations towards a gift made by members? If the monies were not passed on, where is this reflected in the accounts?

10.1.2 Mrs J Bridges was chairman at the time and dealt with this herself. In 2015, over a year ago, when the office moved into new premises, Maggie Court chose to retire as she did not wish to relocate. Council was appreciative of her twenty-five years' service and was pleased to present her with a monetary gift and flowers and champagne as a mark of her loyalty. To keep in touch, she was awarded life membership which provides two magazines each year and she was invited to join us in the VIP marquee at Malvern for a special day at the show. Unfortunately she was unable to attend.

Two donations from members intended for Maggie were sent to the office and are currently held in a deferred account. Council will decide how best to deal with it.

10.2. Question from Mrs J Bridges - What has council done to promote and encourage Anglo and Part Bred Arabs during 2015 and how has the success of the strategy been measured?

10.2.1 The Chairman asked Mrs J Armstrong to read out some notes as follows to answer this question: One of the Society's aims is to encourage the use of Arabian blood into light horse breeding which then obviously creates the Part Bred Arabian for which the society maintains a register.

Part bred registration with the society is offered at a fee less than half the price of Purebred registrations as well as over stamping other societies' documents to enable members and non-members alike to recognise their horses' Arabian blood.

We encourage horses listed in our register to exhibit at our annual show and have in the last few years added many additional classes to highlight the vast types and abilities of them. In fact there are now 89

classes available for Part-Breds and Anglo Arabs to enter, ranging from standard In Hand and Ridden British National Champion classes to Show Jumping, Dressage and Versatility. For further encouragement we offer a reduced show association fee of £20 rather than full membership for exhibitors in these classes.

We have included classes for Part-breds and Anglo Arabians in the British Arabian Championships.

In addition the AHS runs the PHA and UKIHA both of which offer not only prizes and trophies but the opportunity to present in the main ring at the National Show, have extensive coverage in our magazine, online and other avenues. In fact, the overall 2015 PHA Champion is the Part Bred, Mellway Precious Rose. In the AHS magazine members' Part bred Arab foals have been featured and we welcome more.

To further its charitable aims of improving light horse breeding, the AHS runs a Premium Performance Scheme and identifies worthwhile performance stallions which Premium mare owners may use. They receive a financial Premium on registration of the foal. Non-premium mares may be nominated by the stallion owner and receive a lower premium on registration of the foal.

Once under saddle, Premium progeny are eligible for a number of awards and trophies, including in racing and endurance. There are currently around 20 Pure, Part-Arab and Anglo-Arab Premium stallions at stud, or available by AI, in the UK. All of which is aimed at promoting Part bred Arabians as well as purebreds.

During the last 12 months much work has been done by the PR & M Committee to promote the Arabian and its derivatives to a wider audience. Only this last week an excellent coverage of the PHA appeared in the EGB Magazine.

Measurement is difficult if not impossible. In a time where increased breeding for numbers is not always desirable, looking at registration numbers would appear insane. More positive information can be gained by analysis of owners prepared to acknowledge the Part Bred Arabian element of their horses. Our breeders and owners are often the ones at the forefront of promoting the breed through their excellent results and we do, wherever possible, try to encourage this.

In 2016 we have introduced the Bursary Scheme. The purpose of this fund is to encourage and promote the ridden Arabian. There are three bursaries of £250 each which are available to AHS members competing with a horse registered in either of the AHS Stud books or the Part Bred Register. The bursaries will be paid to assist with training costs, specific challenges, or competitions.

Mrs Armstrong said "I am sure I speak for all Council when I say that we value Part Bred and Anglo Arabians just as much as Purebreds and we will continue wherever possible to encourage their breeding and promotion to both our members and the horse world at large."

10.2.2 Mrs A Brown said Part Breds and Anglos are in the 2016 calendar and are to be included in the 2017 calendar also. PR & M will be promoting the calendar to vets, other societies, and other outlets.

10.2.3 Mrs J Armstrong hopes that this answers Mrs J Bridges' question in her absence.

10.3 Mrs A Brown reported on the Performance Horse Awards.

10.3.1 Mrs A Brown brought the meeting's attention to the many rosettes displayed at the back of the room. She thanked Mrs J Phillips for her kind sponsorship. These awards will be presented at the National Show. A mention must go to Overall winner, the Part Bred Arab Mellway Precious Rose and the Pure Bred champion CA Winter Amadeus who is on the front cover of the EGB magazine, achieving good publicity.

10.3.2 Mrs A Brown reported that a Quadrille display with junior riders is being organised for the Nationals at the instigation of Mrs J Philips . It is intended as a trial run for a bigger event in the centenary year.

10.3.3 Mrs A Brown said there was a proposal for a parade of Arabians on the 24th July at the Dubai Day at Newbury racecourse to be held in the parade ring before racing.

10.4 The Chairman announced that the winner of the 2016 WAHO trophy is Jammilah and congratulated the owners, Mr D Ash and Miss J Woodward on this remarkable achievement. The trophy is to be presented at the National show.

10.5 Mrs J Phillips reported that there would be a NASTA grading on the 30th and 31st August 2016 at Milton Keynes. There is a new section for castrated stallions with frozen semen available. They will have some marks deducted as their behaviour would be different as a gelding. Mrs N Meredith said that Council is still appealing this penalty.

10.6 Mrs C Kokta formally thanked Mr Simon Constable for his very informative talk on Laminitis, EMS and Cushings disease. Mrs S Plant asked if he could do this on one evening at the Nationals.

10.7 Mrs J Armstrong announced a new points award scheme across all of the HOYS qualifiers called 'HAPPIE'. Everybody that competes in HOYS qualifier classes has the chance of winning one of the many prizes. Already more cards have been sold for HOYS classes this year than at the same time last year fulfilling the purpose of this new scheme to encourage more exhibitors to enter the classes. Hopefully the decrease in exhibitors over the last few years will be turned into an increase this year. There is a Championship prize of £1000 plus other prizes.

10.7.1 Mrs S Plant asked if the scheme has been publicised. Mrs J Armstrong responded that there is a HOYS Facebook page where it has been publicised. Mrs J White added the scheme was finalised after closing date for articles for the magazine so had missed the opportunity for inclusion.

10.7.2 Mrs P Grant asked if an exhibitor would need a separate card. Mrs J Armstrong replied that no extra card is required. Mrs P Grant continued that access to information by email or internet is very limited to some people. Mrs J Armstrong said that the scheme needs to be made known to judges as points go down to 10th place, so all judges need to place the class down to 10th place where possible.

10.7.3 Mrs F Grant-Chivers thought the scheme a good idea and would like to congratulate the Committee for devising the incentive to get exhibitors back into showing.

10.7.4 Mrs S Plant asked if the exhibitor gets points just for entering or do they need to be forward. Mrs J Armstrong replied points are awarded for entering. The points will be collated by Mrs J White and Linda Nicholson from entries and results provided by the shows.

10.7.5 Mrs J Armstrong said if the horse competes in every qualifier it will accumulate a lot of points. She is also trying to get Grandstand Media to provide a wild card qualifier again this year. Further to this Grandstand Media are driven by statistics and set the qualifiers accordingly. A discussion with Grandstand Media had not ruled out going back to three classes of Arabs but numbers of entries must first be increased.

10.7.6 Mr A Knott said there are only two HOYS qualifiers in the north now that they have all been lost to the south. Mrs J Armstrong replied the placement of qualifiers is out of AHS hands as this is dealt with by HOYS. Mr A Knott continued by saying that qualifiers have not gone back to the county shows as Grandstand Media was indicating. Mrs J White pointed out that some have done. Mr A Knott said that one has been given to the International Show which is not a county show. Mrs J Armstrong explained that HOYS wants a spread of dates and geographical locations throughout the season.

10.7.7 Mrs S Plant asked if all HOYS qualifiers are affiliated to the AHS. Mrs J Armstrong replied that they are.

10.8 Miss F Harper said that not everybody uses a computer and wondered how to get a schedule for the National Show without one. Mrs J Armstrong replied that a flyer was sent out with the membership package carrying information on how to contact the office for a schedule if required. Miss F Harper wondered if it could be advertised in the Horse and Hound so that non-members could see it. Both Mrs J Armstrong and Mrs J Lowe replied that it is too expensive. Mrs C Sussex asked about advertising in the show edition as this may not be as expensive. Mrs J Armstrong said this will be looked at.

10.9 Mrs P Grant asked why the rules have to be printed in the schedule as it is a waste of six pages of paper. Mrs J White replied that when printing it is possible to only select the pages you require instead of printing them all. The schedule is a contract between exhibitor and show so the rules must be in it.

10.10 Mrs Z Atkinson asked if there will be a return of the costume class to the National Show. The Chairman said it was dropped on health and safety grounds as it was too dangerous. Mrs J Lowe added that in classes abroad they now wear hard hats under the costume. The Chairman said it can be considered again and Mrs J Armstrong said Shows and Events Committee will put it on their agenda.

10.11 Mrs Z Atkinson asked why riders need to be members at the National Show. Mrs J Armstrong said it is for insurance purposes as well as it being a members' show. The Chairman added it gives a record of who is on the showground and is a means by which behaviour can be controlled if necessary as membership can be removed and the person prevented from showing.

10.11.1 Mrs G Smith asked if the Bronze Membership can be transferred to another rider in case the initial rider withdraws. The Chairman replied that it could not.

10.11.2 Miss F Harper asked at what point the rider must become a member before riding in the ring. The Chairman replied that it is any time up to entering the ring. Mrs J Armstrong added that all riders and handlers need to be members to enter the ring for National, ECAHO and HOYS classes.

11. There being no further business the meeting was closed at 2.50pm