



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

November 2021

For the Heraldry Society 2020-2021 has been a year of consolidation thanks to the continuance of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown. The pandemic has been a double-edged sword in that the enforced reliance on the internet has ensured that we continue to reach out around the globe with our online lectures and it has also greatly assisted our financial situation but it has also meant that there has not been any face to face meetings or our bi-annual congress which is so vital in giving life and fellowship to a society such as ours.

The membership of the Council has been steady during the year. It has met regularly (via Zoom) and a wide selection of topics have been discussed, for example, cloud based storage of records, the website, and social media. All members of Council have been allocated areas of the society's work and they have been industrious in their labours.

I am delighted to report that the two main areas of concern in the past, declining finances and falling membership, have been reversed. Last year I reported that for the first time for a long time we had broken even with our finances but now we are very much on the right side. As a registered educational charity we are required to spend our money wisely and carefully in order to fulfil our remit to increase and extend interest in and knowledge of heraldry, armory, chivalry, genealogy and allied subjects. We are exploring various avenues to do this, for example, looking into making educational online heraldic videos, publishing books, supporting local heraldry societies, etc. Thanks to our very active online presence with social media and lectures, our membership is increasing daily, which seems to go against the general trend for small societies like ours. Our Treasurer, Colin Lafferty-Smith, has settled in very well and is a worthy successor to Michael Fowle. Our Membership Secretary, Jane Tunesi, continues to do a remarkable job and it must be kept in mind that she is also fulfills other roles in the society with equal professionalism.

The Covid-19 pandemic has ensured that our lecture programme continues to be online via Zoom. Our Programme Secretary, David Phillips, has produced a remarkable and inventive lecture programme. He has also been a very active member of the Communications sub-committee and also the Education and Examinations sub-committee as well as taking the lead in organizing the digitization of the society's arms which will come into fruition shortly.

Our flagship publications *The Coat of Arms* and *The Heraldry Gazette* continue to flourish thanks to the expert abilities of Paul Fox and Jane Tunesi respectively. My grateful thanks to both of them and also to all the contributors who are the life blood to these excellent reads. Stephen Ashley has maintained his quiet but reassuringly steady hand on the production of other forthcoming publications.

In last year's report I made the plea that both *The Coat of Arms* and *The Heraldry Gazette* rely upon articles submitted by members and I urged everybody to consider submitting articles for publication. This I ask again for without them there would be no such publications and the society would be very much the poorer.

Although he is no longer on Council Andrew Gray has continued his superb work with the society Image Library and Archive. It is an enormous task which he carries on with remarkable forbearance.

Our webmaster, Graham Bartram, continues the excellent work of his predecessor, Andrew. Graham is also very active on the committees.

Martin Davies has been working very hard on reviewing and revising the Articles of Association and I am indebted to him for all his hard work and legal expertise.

John Titterton with his remit to liaise with provincial heraldic societies has made strenuous efforts to try and persuade them to take to the Zoom road in order to survive the pandemic. It is deeply worrying that there seems to be a refusal to even try it by some of them, whereas, where it has been tried it has been met with success. I am very grateful to John for his persistence.

The Corporate Heraldry Award and the annual Photographic Competition continue to attract a lot of interest and they are ably administered by Clive Alexander. Under his hand these events are increasing in popularity and are very successful. If you have never done so before then please do consider entering one or both of them. You may win and become the proud possessor of one of David Hopkinson's superb hand painted certificates.

The society examinations are ably managed by Richard Baker. The structure of the examinations has stood unchanged for a long time and it is an area that will come under review in the not too distant future.

Social media is now such an important tool for publicity and the recruitment of new members. Paul Jagger has spearheaded this for us and he has been unremitting in his duties. His hard work has paid dividends and we now have a very active presence thanks to him.

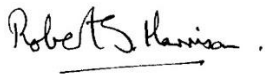
John Tunesi, our Secretary and Jane Tunesi our Membership Secretary, Librarian, Shop Manager and Editor of *The Heraldry Gazette*, have, as ever, been remarkable stalwarts. They put in an enormous amount of hard work, a lot of it behind the scenes. In addition to their allotted tasks they have also been our presence at family history fairs and also they have been cataloguing our library and removing the books from our store to the

Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies in Canterbury where our library is stored and available to all our members.

I am indebted to the Deputy Chairman, Peter O'Donoghue, York Herald, for all his support and wise advice. Always cool, calm and collected, he has been a powerful and reasoning force in committee.

I am grateful to all members of Council for all their hard work to help make the society such a success. However, we must not rest on our laurels as there is still much more work to be done.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the society for their support through their membership and also their participation in the online activities. The survival of the society depends upon you and if you would like to get actively involved in any way then I would be very interested to hear from you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Harrison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Robert Harrison
Chairman