



**Minutes of the 97th Annual General Meeting of
the Society for Army Historical Research held at the Honourable Artillery
Company, Armoury House, City Rd, London EC1Y 2BQ 77 on
Wednesday 30th April 2025 at 17.00**

1 President's welcome

The President, Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Smyth-Osbourne, gave a short welcome and thanked members for their continued support. He emphasised the importance of the work done by Council during the year, in particular the Memorandum of Understanding with the National Army Museum and the excellence of the journal, in terms of both contributions and character. Membership numbers remain strong, but we need to retain and develop these further. He also noted the trouble taken with the handover of offices.

2 Attendance and apologies for absence

There were 52 members present. Apologies had been received from Nicola Martin.

3 Adoption of the Minutes of the 96th Annual General Meeting held on 22 April 2024

The Minutes of the 96th Annual General Meeting, held on 22 April 2024 at the National Army Museum, which had been made available to members online, were proposed for adoption by Dr Andrew Cormack, seconded by Rohan Saravannamuttu, and agreed unanimously.

4 Adoption of the Trustees' Report & the Accounts for 1 January to 31 December 2024

The Honorary Officers' Reports & the Accounts for 1 January to 31 December 2024 were introduced by Rohan Saravannamuttu. Their adoption was proposed by Freddie Hyde, seconded by Simon Shephard and agreed unanimously.

5 Thanks to the contributors to the Society's Journal

The President noted that the Journal is central to the Society's activities and relies entirely on voluntary contributions of material.

Zeb Micic proposed a vote of thanks to Dr Andrew Cormack for his work as Hon. Editor of the Journal and to all those who had contributed to it. This was seconded by Peter Swabey and agreed by acclaim.



6 Request for an increase in subscription rates

The Hon. Treasurer, Rohan Saravannamuttu, introduced a proposal, approved and recommended by Council, to approve:

- i. an increase in the annual subscription rate for Full International Members from £55 (or USD 72) to £65 (or USD 82);
- ii. the creation of the new membership categories of UK Institutions and International Institutions (both excluding military museums). Institutional members will be offered both a paper and digital copy of the Journal;
- iii. an annual subscription rate for UK Institutions to be £90;
- iv. an annual subscription rate for International Institutions to be £110 or USD 139;
- v. that these changes be implemented with effect from 1 January 2026.

There were no questions. The proposal was seconded by Simon Shephard and agreed unanimously.

7 To elect members to Council for the coming year

Ashley Truluck, Chair of Council, thanked Rory Butcher, Carole Divall, Eamonn O'Keeffe and Charles Street for their services on Council.

He presented the following for election as members of the Council of the Society for the following year with areas of responsibility as indicated:

Dr Andrew Bamford MA, PhD (Digital Media)
Professor Ian Beckett BA, PhD, FRHistS, FSAHR (Chair of Templer Medal Sub-Committee)
Dr Andrew Cormack BA, PhD, FSA, FRHistS (Hon. Editor)
Frederick Hyde BA, MA, FRHistS (Events)
Dr Nicola Martin PhD, FHEA (Grants)
Zeb Micic MA, FSA Scot (Essay Prize)
Dr Glyn Pryor PhD (National Army Museum Liaison)
Colonel Giles Orpen-Smellie BA (Hon. Membership Secretary)
Rohan Saravannamuttu BSc, MA, ACA (Hon. Treasurer)
Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Simon Shephard MA
Dr Andy Simpson BA, PhD, FRHistS (Book Reviews Editor)
Peter Swabey BA, FCG (Hon. Secretary)



Their election to constitute the Council of the Society for the following year was proposed *en bloc* by Ashley Truluck, seconded by Rory Butcher and agreed unanimously.

8 Election of Chair

Ashley Truluck having completed his term as Chair of Council, under Section 6(e) of the Society's Constitution, Council unanimously recommended the election of Brigadier Dr James Cook OBE, PhD as his successor with effect from the end of the Annual General Meeting. This was agreed unanimously.

Brigadier Cook, who had left the meeting for this item, was invited to return and thanked the members present for placing their trust in him.

9 Appointment of Independent Examiner

Giles Orpen-Smellie proposed, and Peter Swabey seconded, the appointment of Haydn Wood (Partner), SRG LLP, of 28 Ely Place, London, EC1N 6AA as Independent Examiner. This was agreed unanimously.

10 Report on the 2024 Templer Medal and Chapple Prize

Professor Ian Beckett reported to members on the selection process for the Templer Medal and Chapple Prize. The results would be announced at the prizegiving that evening. He expressed his thanks to the judges for all their work, especially Dr Alan Jeffreys and Peter Robinson, who step down from the Templer Panel at this AGM.

Professor Beckett advised members that Dr Daniel Cowling, representing the National Army Museum and Dr David Grummitt, formerly of the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University, now of the Open University will replace Dr Jeffreys and Mr Robinson.

He also advised members that Professor Lynn Mackay of Brandon University, Manitoba will act as a one-year replacement for Professor Jennine Hurl-Eamon, who has a book to be published in 2025 which she wishes to enter for the Templer Medal and will consequently stand down from the panel for this year.

Finally, Professor Beckett asked that any members who become aware of privately publications that might be worthy of consideration for the Templer Medal or Chapple Prize let him know, as these are not always visible to the panel.



11 Honorary Officer's reports on the Activities of the Society

- i Ashley Truluck gave a short valedictory address. It is twelve years since Tim Cooke invited him to become Chair of the Society and nearly five years since his successor, Ewan Carmichael, approached him to stand in to complete his five-year term as Chair should he need to step down for personal reasons, as indeed he did.

In that time, Council has:

- Conducted a Strategic Review of our strengths & Weaknesses every 5 years
- Reviewed our Governance arrangements, allocating specific portfolios to *existing* Council members and producing definitive Trustee Guidelines for *new* members.
- Stabilised our finances in the wake of Covid and austerity – adjusting membership fees accordingly.
- Negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding with NAM – cementing our long-standing relationships and doubling the amount of money available for grants and prizes in the process.
- Overhauled our Templer Book Competition (becoming a victim of its own success) to include the Chapple Prize for best first authors.

Meanwhile the Journal continues as our flagship production and we are slowly putting in place a broader-based Editorial Committee to ensure its long-term future.

Beyond these staple activities, we have increased the range of services we offer to include more lectures, dinners, tours, and online services – and to offer a variety interesting venues for our events.

As a result, we have stabilised and then increased membership numbers at a time when other membership Societies are floundering, with commensurate increase in numbers turning up at our events.



He concluded by thanking the Officers and Council members for their work.

- ii Dr Andrew Cormack, Honorary Editor, offered a short report. Four very varied Journals had been published in the previous twelve months with, as ever, a balance of content between those who prefer 'red ink' and those who prefer 'khaki ink'.

He made two requests to members. Firstly, to consider taking an additional discounted subscription for a membership for their old school; and, secondly, to let him know if they are aware of any interesting portraits etc that might make an appropriate frontispiece for the journal.

- iii Zeb Micic, Essay Prize Co-ordinator, outlined the changes to the essay prize competition.
- iv Freddie Hyde, Events Co-ordinator, outlined the plan for the rest of the day.

Peter Swabey, Honorary Secretary, Rohan Saravanamuttu, Honorary Treasurer and Giles Orpen-Smellie, Honorary Membership Secretary had nothing further to report.

11 Any other business

No other business having been intimated to the Hon. Secretary in advance of the meeting, the floor was opened to questions and observations, of which there were none.

The 98th Annual General Meeting of the Society will be in April 2026 on a date and at a venue to be selected by the Society's Council.

Lieutenant General Sir Edward Smyth-Osbourne
President

29th April 2026