



Bath Royal

Literary and Scientific Institution

Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution

The Promotion and Advancement of Science, Literature and Art

Annual Report to Members

for the year

1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

16-18 Queen Square
BATH BA1 2HN

Bath (01225) 312 084
www.brlsi.org
Charity Number 300477



Board of Directors of the Trustee Company

There were fourteen Directors for the year 2021-22, eight elected and six appointed, as follows:

Mr Richard Bateman	Elected	from 20 October 2021
Mr Stephen Bird	Appointed	SW Federation of Museums and Art Galleries
Mrs Julie Cole	Elected	from 20 October 2021
Mr Michael Davis	Elected	Vice-Chair
Prof Jonathan Dawes	Appointed	University of Bath
Dr Daniela de Angeli	Appointed	University of Bath
<i>Dr Henry Ford</i>	Elected	re-elected October 2018 retired 20 October 2021
Prof Ian Gadd	Appointed	Chair: from 20 October 2021 Bath Spa University
Mr Christopher Garcia	Elected	from 18 October 2019
Prof Barry Gilbertson	Elected	from 20 October 2021
Mr David Hall	Appointed	Bath Preservation Trust
Mr Joe Houlihan	Elected	from 20 October 2021
<i>Ms Geraldine Kontos</i>	Elected	from 24 October 2018 resigned 1 September 2021
<i>Dr Penelope Law</i>	Elected	re-elected October 2018 retired 20 October 2021
Cllr Bharat Pankhania	Appointed	Bath and NE Somerset Council
Mr Rob Randall	Elected	from 20 October 2021
<i>Mrs Elizabeth Suchar</i>	Elected	Immediate past-Chair retired 20 October 2021
Dr Joe Willson	Elected	from October 2020

ATTENDANCES

	10 Jun 21	9 Sept 21	AGM	9 Dec 21	27 Jan	10 Mar 22	25 Mar 22
Mr Richard Bateman	.	.	●	●	●	●	●
Mr Stephen Bird	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
Mrs Julie Cole	.	.	●	●	●	●	●
Mr Michael Davis	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
Prof Johnathan Dawes	●	●	●	●		○	●
Dr Daniela de Angeli	●	○	●	○	●	●	●
Dr Henry Ford	●	●	●
Prof Ian Gadd	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mr Christopher Garcia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Prof Barry Gilbertson	.	.	●	●	○	●	●
Mr David Hall	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mr Joe Houlihan	.	.	●	○	●	●	○
<i>Dr Penelope Law</i>	●	○	●
Cllr Bharat Pankhania	○	●	○	○	●	●	○
Mr Rob Randall	.	.	●	●	○	●	●
<i>Mrs Elizabeth Suchar</i>	●	●	●
Dr Joe Willson	●	●	●	●	○	●	●

Report of the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Trustee Company

for the year ended 31st March 2022

Hello and welcome to this, the Annual Report for the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution, covering the period from April 2021 to March 2022.

The Institution has been producing some kind of Annual Report ever since its foundation. In its present version, the Report has a formal purpose, to accompany the official accounts for the charity and the corporate trustees, and so it is circulated at the Annual General Meeting and made available on our website.

However, it is also an important opportunity for those who run the Institution on your behalf to update you on Institutional activities during the past financial year. As a result, this Report provides written accounts of our finances, fundraising activities, membership, staff, volunteers, programmes, collections, premises, and digital and communication activities, each prepared by the key volunteer responsible for that particular area.

There is also a general overview of the Institution's activities given on pp.4–5 on the Charity accounts for 2021/22 (also available on our website) which highlights our particular achievements — dozens of talks and events, a new exhibition, a new digital app, a developing partnership with Bath Festivals, improvements made to our digital and physical infrastructure, ongoing grant success and so on — and commends our staff and volunteers for their exceptional work and commitment.

Overall, the Institution ended the 2021/22 financial year in a much stronger and forward-looking position than had been the case at its start.

Writing six months on, we have built on those achievements: the *Beyond Beastly* exhibition has been a major success; we were a key venue for May's Bath Festival and September's Children's Literature Festival: the new infrastructure is providing a better experience for those hosting talks or meetings in the building; and the feedback from our Heritage Lottery Fund grant was so positive that they are keen for us to apply for further funding.

We also held two 'Town Halls' to hear from members and, more recently, a reception for members who joined us since April 2020. Elham Jones-Redman and Matt Little joined the Room Hire team. We have new Directors: Simon Hayhoe and Farooq Mughal from the University of Bath to replace Jonathan Dawes and Daniela De Angeli, and Mary Burton to replace Dick Bateman as one of our elected Directors.

I'd also like to note with sadness the passing of the following members during 2021/22: Philip Henry Bayliss, Denis Poole, Ian Gilchrist, Stanley Atkinson.

(Chris Garcia stood again and will continue as a Director). Honorary memberships were granted to Marie-Louise Luxemburg and Martin Sturge by the Board.

Professor Ian Gadd

Chair of the Board of Directors



FINANCE

During the year we started to see some recovery from the impact of the pandemic. Income from Programmes, Membership and Collections all increased, and are heading back towards pre-pandemic levels. We also saw a recovery in our Room Hire bookings, as many of our regular customers began to return to face-to-face meetings.

On the downside, income from commercial tenants was down substantially year on year as we were unable to re-let the two vacant spaces as we had expected at budget time. We have in fact now let one of those spaces and are close to letting the remaining one. However, the net effect was a significant reduction in rental income in the year.

We continued to closely manage our operating expenses, such that we made significant savings compared to the previous year.

We received a small amount of Covid-19 support, but substantially less than prior year. We also started making repayments on the Bounce Back loan that we had received.

Having received significant grant income in the previous year, this year we had a small net grant expenditure as we implemented the various funded projects.

Overall, despite the significant drop in rental income, our Net Operating Income was a relatively small loss of -£26,4000. However, global stock markets continued to show some recovery, and the value of our investments increased by £45,785. The result was that the Net Income for the year was £19,385.

There was no brchange in the market valuation of the building during the year, so our Net Movement in Funds was also £19,385, which is the first time it has been positive since 2018/19.

The detailed Statutory Accounts for 2021/22 are available on our website.

Joe Willson

Chair: Finance sub-Committee

FUNDRAISING

We have had another busy year on the fundraising front with two more grant successes and a number of generous donations.

Most significant was a £90,000 grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund as well as a further grant from South West Museums Development Project recovery fund. BRLSI has now been awarded approaching £200,000 from grant applications over the last few years which have been critical in enabling us to bounce back from the COVID lockdowns with a range of fresh investments to extend our heritage offers and reach new audiences.

The grant from the Lottery enabled us to undertake a pilot project to promote our digital resources and enhance the digital and user infrastructure in our building. Visitors to the building will notice the much improved Wi-Fi and internet connectivity as well as new audio equipment and displays in several rooms.

The South West Museums Development Project recovery fund has enabled us to add a further trail to our digital App (this time to celebrate the local connection with Jane Austen) as well as new podcast audio equipment so we can spread our talks far and wide. If you haven't yet tried one of the trails download the BRLSI Discovery Trails App to your smartphone from the usual Apple or Android App stores and set off on a guided tour of our lovely city.

Another highlight of the year was the restricted donation of £7,500 from the Jane Austen Society (Bristol & Bath branch) for educational activities and purposes of Jane Austen studies and the development and maintenance of legacy content from these activities. We were also fortunate to receive two generous £2000 donations from long standing members to our Collection Preservation Fund and the 1824 fund (the former anonymously and the latter from Brian McEleny) which will allow us to continue to invest in the Institution.

We should also like to thank the many other members and visitors who gave us smaller contributions via our donation facilities online or in Queen Square.

All support, no matter how large or small is hugely valued, and our 1824 fund remains open for legacies from wills or other donations in support of future developments.

Chris Garcia

Fundraising lead

COLLECTIONS

In May 2021 we launched our BRLSI Discovery Trails app, available free of charge on Android and Apple smartphones, comprising four walking trails with thematic narratives linking to four key objects from the Collection.

These objects are a section of a 4.3-billion-year-old stony-iron meteorite from Siberia, a 160-million-year-old crocodile skull from a railway cutting in Wiltshire, Rev. Leonard Jenyns' copy of Charles Darwin's '*Origin of Species*' accompanied by a letter from the author, together with crucifixes and rosaries from the battlefields of the Crimean War.

They all now form a permanent display in the Jenyns room. We are grateful for the generous support of the Art Fund and M. St J Way Charitable Trust in developing the Discovery Trails app and accompanying exhibition. The app text was developed and written by our staff and volunteer team and was designed by staff and postgraduates from Bath School of Design, Bath Spa University.

Our summer exhibition was *Jurassic Ark*, an updated and very successful display of an exhibition centre on our collection of remarkable fossils from the Toarcian (183 million years old) of Strawberry Bank, Ilminster. First shown in 2014, the new version of the exhibition featured the latest research and a report of our 2019 excavations. Coming at the end of the pandemic, *Jurassic Ark* was especially well attended and visitors were very generous in both their appreciation and donations.

By the end of 2021 Matt Williams, our Collections Manager, who was furloughed through much of the lockdown, was back to full time duty and both he and our team of volunteers have resumed their work in the care, documentation and use of the collection.

The end of last year and the beginning of this one have been absorbed in great part by our preparation of what will be our 2022 exhibition: '*Beyond Beastly: creatures natural and imagined*'.

Henry Ford

Chair: Collections sub-Committee

MEMBERSHIP

Over the last financial year membership increased by 15% to 643, much of which is believed to be the result of our coming out of lockdown and the ability of people to attend the Institution once more.

It is now routine that all new Members are approved by the Directors at the Board meeting following their joining. It has also been agreed that the Membership Number, names, joining and leaving dates, and addresses of all ex-Members will be securely stored for 10 years as required by the Companies Act 2006.

We are making a push to recruit more Organisation Members, who will be able to enjoy the same benefits as other members: attending and voting at the AGM, nominating Elected Directors, getting reduced entry to talks and events.

The new Membership sub-Committee is now fully functional

David Haywood

Chair: Membership sub-Committee

STAFF

Following the resignations of three room hire assistants during 2021, new staff provision was required. Music co-Convenor Tim Greeves was approached to see if he could help through from October and was duly appointed on a temporary basis, which greatly helped in maintaining the Institution's functions through the festive period.

Moreover and in a completely different direction, in his time with us Tim resolved a problem with the Room Hire booking system which had previously bedevilled and defeated everyone whereby it now properly links up with our Accounting system and so enables a reliable and accurate invoicing process to be implemented, which had previously led to serious errors and confusions, for which the Institution will be profoundly grateful.

The quest for staff replacements continued and led to the appointment of Elham Jones-Redman (permanent) and Matthew Little (temporary) with the title 'Operations Assistant(s)' to administer room hire, audio-visual and information technology tasks.

They both settled in quickly and all room hire commitments were maintained throughout.

Elham showed a particular aptitude in IT and was asked to take on extra hours in

digital marketing, originally with grant funding and latterly through BRLSI direct,

Matthew's appointment was always conditional on his joining University of Bath's microbiology programme to read for his doctorate in which he was duly successful and thus will be leaving us in August, with our congratulations and thanks for his efficient contribution to the Institution's activities, especially in closing the building down after evening meetings.

Gerie Herbert has continued to be a tower of strength not only as the 'friendly face' on the front desk but also in organising the volunteers, keeping an eye on Jenyns Room exhibitions as well as, with Rachel Small and her team, keeping everyone informed of events via the monthly Events bulletins and Membership newsletters.

Paul Browne has not only overseen the recovery of the room hire programme after Covid, which is now approaching the levels we had before the pandemic, but also performs the equally important task of acting as on-site manager in the continual process of the maintenance and upkeep of the main structure and fabric of the building, and its various internal services installations.

As our longest-serving member of Staff, Matt Williams' special contribution as our Collections Manager is reserved to its own section of the Annual Report under Collections.

Dick Bateman

Chair: Staff sub-Committee

PROGRAMME

Despite the ongoing pandemic, the cultural programme at the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution continued to flourish.

The online programme continued to prove a remarkable success with local and international audiences alike to which the Institution was delighted to open its doors once more to members and visitors in July 2021.

As a result, the Cultural Programme continued to build on the success of the online facilities, by holding hybrid meetings and talks to virtual and physical audiences simultaneously, which helped to reach more diverse and international audiences. At the same time, hybrid meetings also enabled us to reach speakers on a global basis. Several international speakers 'beamed' in from abroad to live audiences in the Elwin Room and simultaneously to a virtual audience around the world.

During the year, the Cultural Programme delivered:

- ◆ 107 Live talks at the Institution, either online or both:-
- ◆ to a total audience of 3,607
- ◆ and a video legacy of more than 200 talks on the Virtual BRLSI YouTube channel

The year started with a series of talks on Russia's Artistic Journey, and little did anyone know at the time that it would end the year with a poignant set of talks on the war in Ukraine. In between, the programme covered more than a dozen diverse interest areas, spanning from Business & Economics to World Affairs.

The Institution extends its heartfelt gratitude and thanks to all the convenors who 7

have been instrumental in making the cultural programme a reality. We would also like to thank Stuart Reynolds for organising the excellent Victor Suchar Christmas lecture by Lord Rees on the World in 2050: and a big thank you also goes to David Haywood who stepped down as World Affairs convenor, in which role he added significant value to the overall programme over a number of years.

Youth activities at BRLSI continued with the 6th Form Philosophy seminars, covering a range of interesting topics such as freedom of speech, climate ethics, duties of aid, silencing and oppression, gender theory and civil disobedience.

The success of the cultural programme would not have been possible without the first-class contributions by the other areas of the Institution, especially Virtual BRLSI, Website & IT, Collections and Fundraising.

Over the coming year, the programme will continue to evolve with the planned establishment of several symposia, panel discussions and new convenor groups in which everyone is most welcome to participate and the sub-Committee team look forward to hearing from you.

Andreas Wasmuht

Chair: Programme sub-Committee

DIGITAL AND COMMUNICATIONS

The past 12 months have been a busy period for our digital and communications activities. During this time the BRLSI transitioned out of Covid 19 restrictions and also saw the implementation of a major grant-funded investment in digital activity and infrastructure.

Out of Lockdown

During lockdown we were successful in moving the majority of the Institution's talks programme online, hosting hundreds of lectures over Zoom. Moving out of lockdown brought its own challenges: although talks were moving back into Queen Square we wanted to ensure that people would be able to continue to attend online if they were unable to attend in person.

To that end we have established a "hybrid" approach to talks, so that they can be enjoyed in real time either in person or on Zoom. The technology that has enabled us to do this has also opened up new possibilities in attracting speakers: we are now able to have a speaker presenting their talk on a big screen at Queen Square to a live audience in the room even if the speaker is in a different town, country or continent.

The "new normal" for lectures is to have speakers delivering their presentations to a combined online and in-person audience. So far, the numbers for people attending online and in person are broadly comparable. Online attendance gives us the opportunity to greatly expand attendance numbers in the future.

Lottery Fund Grant

During 2021-22 we were able to implement a significant project financed by the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF). The project was divided into two 'streams':

one aimed at boosting our capabilities in regard to social media and our digital presence, the other aimed at improving the digital infrastructure at Queen Square to enhance our room hire offering.

Stream 1: Digital and Communications

An outside consultant (Greg Fearon) was recruited for six months to help us improve our skills and practices. Steps taken included:

- ◆ Training our volunteers and staff in a raft of digital tools to enable us to maximise our promotional efforts (these include Canva, MailChimp, Survey Monkey, Trello, Hootsuite, Google Suite, Meetup as well as the more familiar Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and others).
- ◆ Recruiting new volunteers for same.
- ◆ Developing a consistent style across all our promotional output.
- ◆ Exploring the best ways of using social media tools to promote BRLSI talks, exhibitions and other activities.
- ◆ Finding stories with cut-through appeal to gain wider media attention for BRLSI activities (success in this regard resulted in one of our stories featuring on Radio 4's Today Programme and in several national newspapers).
- ◆ Restructuring staff and volunteer work patterns in relation to digital and communications.

Engagement with the Institution has increased across all the social media platforms we use, including YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Systems and processes were put in place to ensure that these innovations would continue after the consultant's departure, thanks to the work of a core of young volunteers as well as the dedication of existing staff

Now we have a framework of weekly meetings to ensure that all promotional opportunities and needs are being catered for.

Before this project the responsibility for promotional activity was not clearly defined and fell somewhat under the remit of three different sub-committees (each reporting into the BRLSI Management Committee). The Publicity SC, the Digital SC and the Website SC would all get involved in different ways but did not really talk to each other on a consistent basis and guidance for staff and volunteers was hit-and-miss.

The NHLF project forced us to review this structure and we have responded by combining the Publicity, Digital and (part of the) Website sub committees into this new SC, 'Digital and Communications.' This new SC is very much an action-orientated SC and takes direct responsibility for the three weekly meetings mentioned above and for providing clear goals, guidance and support for the staff and volunteers who attend those meetings.

Stream 2: Audio-Visual Upgrade

Room hire is an important source of revenue for the BRLSI, helping to fund our

cultural activities. The room hire market is very competitive, even more so now that 'Work From Home' is apparently an established part of contemporary life, with a resulting reduction in demand for office/meeting space. Audio-visual equipment at the BRLSI building was becoming outdated and not sufficiently versatile for modern requirements; meanwhile wifi connectivity in the building was prone to problems.

The NHLF grant enabled us to significantly upgrade the audio-visual and digital infrastructure throughout the rooms we use for room hire, making us a more appealing destination for potential clients. The wifi connectivity issues have also been addressed by replacing the old server.

Using the NHLF funds we first recruited an external specialist (Tony Lake) to conduct an audit of the existing equipment and recommend improvements. We then invited a number of companies to tender for installing the new equipment. The successful applicant, Spike Island (based in Bristol) completed the installation in late March 2022 with some modifications since then.

The equipment upgrades include enhanced audio-visual equipment (cameras, microphones, speakers, monitors, lights) using a 'smart system' that means individual rooms can be used for individual tasks or for communicating with groups in other rooms.

We were able to install Eduroam access which is a particularly useful digital tool for students, as well as virtual conferencing facilities which we previously lacked.

Faster broadband and the replacement of our old server underpin our digital resources and connectivity, and have even enabled us to bring in an extra room for hire, further strengthening the financial sustainability of the Institution.

The improvements were helpful when the BRLSI building was used a main venue for the Bath Festival in May, bringing well over a thousand visitors into the building for a wide range of cultural events. Feedback from the organisers has enabled us to further improve the functionality of our audio-visual systems since the Festival finished.

An external evaluator was appointed to assess the outcome of the NHLF grant and submitted a very positive assessment to the NHLF which accepted the report.

Virtual Memberships

It is an ongoing ambition of the Digital & Communications group to establish a tier of Digital Subscribers (Virtual Members) who can join the BRLSI wherever in the world they happen to live. Although not full members with voting rights, these Subscribers would be able to attend online talks at a discounted rate and receive some other benefits (for example, access to a 'private virtual tour' of new exhibitions).

The website infrastructure to accommodate the Digital Subscribers is now in place and we are intending to roll out the scheme during Q4 2022.

A charitable trust, the M. St. John Way Trust, which has supported the BRLSI in the past, was very taken with the idea of the Digital Subscriber scheme and particularly with its potential for recruiting young people as online members. The Trust has made a donation of £500 to cover the cost of 100 virtual memberships for young people.

We are currently planning a project to work with schools in the Bath area for them to run an essay competition (or similar), with the five winning entries per school receiving a free VM to the BRLSI. .

Joe Houlihan

Chair: Digital and Communications sub-Committee

PREMISES

The Institution occupies about half the available floor area of the main building in Queen Square, of which the rentals are a significant part of the Institution's total income.

The administration of the service charge, which comes on top of the rents, is the crucial factor which until recent times has tended to be overlooked and neglected, leading to some serious underestimates that has cut across the surpluses that otherwise derive from the rents.

With the appointment of CSquared (then Colston + Colston) in 2019 as Chartered Surveyors and the Institution's Managing Agents, these matters have now been put onto a proper professional footing although it will take a little while for the full benefits to work their way through.

With the recent re-letting of the Moore Room, all the commercial floor areas on the part-ground and upper floors are now let on lease at modern rents with proper Service Charge provisions which together are working out well.

At the time of writing, however, there appear to be choppy waters ahead arising from the pending energy crisis. All that can be said for the moment is that the Institution is much better placed to deal with whatever the future may bring than it had been in former years.

Energy crisis

Members will be pleased to hear that the Institution has a Fixed Tariff Contract with its energy suppliers that lasts until August next year (2023), which should at least see us through the winter. After that, it will of course drop back onto whatever is the going rate at the time – which equally very much remains to be seen.

Energy Conservation

In the meantime, it will be invidious of the Institution to be seen to be carrying on much as usual in these difficult times, and measures are to be taken, for example in keeping windows and shutters closed and blanking off some lighting arrays, so to be seen to responding to the crisis.

This will take some few days/weeks of trial and error in the early stages to come up with a workable solution that will not inflict too heavily on keeping the Institution open for business in the usual way.

Mike Twohig

Chair: Premises sub-Committee

VOLUNTEERS

The Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution has approximately 100 volunteer roles which encompass work with our collections, as part of our front of house, on our programmes, within our committees and in the publicity team. Since lockdown, our new and rather exciting digital reboot has birthed a virtual corps of volunteers who work both weekly and collectively on our press and digital content.

Volunteering sits at the heart of everything the Institution provides or produces, and without the skills, time, and generosity of everyone's unique efforts, our programmes and collections simply could not run as effectively. Since lockdown we have not simply run, we have been thriving.

The warmth and vibrancy of our Queen square environment, the maintenance of the incredible objects that make up our collection, the creation of content that enables our live programme to get back on its feet and allows you to watch it from the comfort of home, even the ability of our members to purchase a ticket in the first place, all of these things are available because a collective team of dedicated individuals have generously undertaken to work collaboratively with others and undertake, the work at no cost to the institution.

What we as an Institution hope to offer in return for a volunteer's time is work that is challenging and rewarding, and makes them feel part of a fun, if slightly eccentric community. Our volunteer party with an annual song which namechecks each and every volunteer individually, we like to think is without parallel.

This spring and summer we were delighted to embark on a new venture with Bath festivals and those weekends saw not only great support from both our front desk and digital teams but a fresh injection of life into the building that had been somewhat amiss since the onset of the pandemic in 2019. Volunteers regularly communicated and supported each other via a volunteer What's app group and the festival witnessed over 1160 people cross our threshold, many for the first time.

Each of our volunteers worked tremendously hard and enthusiastically to make new guests welcome, letting first time visitors know the full breadth of what the institution has to offer them and making them feel that this was an institution for everyone. Feedback from the Bath festival team on the level of volunteer commitment, and the sense of fun that we as an institution communicated was much welcome and the follow-up celebratory Pimm's and Lemonade afternoon in the Queen Square courtyard was fully deserved. Each volunteer who gave up their time was sent an individual thank you by our Board of Directors.

More hands make lighter work, and though volunteer retention since the pandemic remains high, our needs as an institution have very much changed. We are always on the lookout for fresh offers of help and no matter what your interests and talents we always welcome your wider participation and ideas. Whether this be a front facing role or something behind the scenes there will always be something to fit your particular set of requirements.

At present we are particularly on the lookout for volunteers from a journalistic background or who might be happy to work on the backend of our website. We are perennially looking for people to join our front of house team or others who might be

happy to take on administrative tasks. Whatever you have to offer us we would love to hear about it via volunteer@brlsi.org

Thank you to all our volunteers for their commitment over the last couple of years, the fact we have emerged from a pandemic not just intact but stronger is testament to your generosity and support, and we couldn't have done it without you.

Gerie Herbert

Volunteer Co-ordinator

END of
ANNUAL REPORT to Members
for the year
1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

CURRENT HONORARY AND ORGANISATIONAL MEMBERS

Current Honorary Members

- Cindy Beadman
- Robert Draper
- John Gardner
- Michael King
- Dr Evelyn Lewis
- Marie-Louise Luxemburg
- Martin Sturge
- Betty Suchar
- Brenda Vicary-Finch

Organisational Members

- TLC (Bath) Ltd
- Bath Preservation Trust

Honorary memberships granted by the Board

In April 2022, Andreas Wasmuht nominated Marie-Louise Luxemburg and Martin Sturge for honorary membership in the light of their long-standing contribution to the Institution.

The Board unanimously approved these nominations, noting that Marie-Louise and Martin have been an integral part of the Institution since at least the late 1990s/early 2000s, acting as Directors, committee members and chairs, and as subject convenors for our programme of talks and events.

Their contribution and dedication to advancing and promoting its cultural activities has been exemplary and invaluable.

The variety and richness of their contributions to the Institution can be seen below.

Martin Sturge

Convenor

- 1998: Convenor for *Paradise Transplanted* special series
- 1998-2005: Co-convenor for *French Civilisation*
- From 2003: Convenor for *Belief*
- 2007: Co-Convenor *Intellectuals of Bath* and *Passions in Botany*
- 2009-10: Programme Manager for *Darwin comes to Bath*
- 2009-10: Convenor of 8 Darwin Institution Lectures
- 2009-10: Convenor of Children's Theatre event *Darwin's Worms*
- 2010-11: Convenor for *Romans in Bath* Special Series

- 2010-17: Co-Convenor for *Speaking of Research*
- 2012-13: Convenor for *Creativity* Special Series

Organiser

- Trips to 'The Eden Project & Lost Garden of Heligan' (2002) and 'Roman Caerwent & Caerleon' (2010)
- Poetry competitions (2002, 2003, 2004)

Other services

- From 2011: Chair of the Room Hire subcommittee
- 2015-18: Elected Director
- To 2020: Member of the Finance subcommittee

Talks including: ~

- 'Gardens: Problem or Dream' (1999), ● 'Belief' (2000),
- 'La Pastorale de Maurel' (2001),
- 'Lady Miller & Her Poetical Assemblies at Batheaston 1774-1781'
- 'Botany of the Maya: their practical skills and spiritual understandings' (2016)

Marie-Louise Luxemburg

- 2003-7: Secretary of the Programmes subcommittee
- 2004-14: Editor and designer of *BRLSI Proceedings*
- 2007-15: Chair of the Programmes subcommittee
- 2007-20: BRLSI Poster and leaflet designer
- 2008-17: Elected Director
- From 2012: Convenor of *History and Culture*

- 2010-20: BRLSI Calendar editor and designer
- From 2016: Member of Members' Library subcommittee

Talks including:

- *'Faith & Gender: Eve the Temptress to Subversive Angel: the flowering of Feminism' (2004), 'The Diary of Ann Frank' (2004), 'Hannah More: A Vindication' (2007), 'A Sense of Place in Jean Rhys's 'Good Morning Midnight' (2007), 'Fanny Burney: Life imitating Art' (2008), 'Darwin's Shadow on the Victorian Imagination' (2009), 'Life & Times of Corderan, French Soldier of the Sea' (2011), 'Sir Robert Dudley: Privateer, explorer, cartographer, inventor & bigamist' (2011), 'Blue Gold: The European Indigo Planters of Bengal' (2016), 'Rosa Luxemburg' (2017), 'Rosa's Brother: Natan Mikolaj Luxemburg' (2018), 'The Cost of Faith: The Flight of the Huguenots' (2018), 'Ann Ford Thicknesse 1737-1824: A Woman Ahead of her Time' (2019), 'Hannah More: Poet, Playwright, Bluestocking, Campaigner' (2020), 'Faith & Gender: Eve the Temptress to Subversive Angel' (2022)*

Reminiscences of a former Chair

Professor Julian Vincent stepped down as Chair of the Publications subcommittee earlier this year. Julian served as Chair of the Board between 2006 and 2013, and the current Chair asked him to reflect on his service to the Institution.

My association with the BRLSI started around 2003. Liz [Vincent] and I were wandering through Queen Square when we came to a building from which was coming loud and lively conversation. Loud and lively is our currency, so we had a look inside and were immediately invited to join the coffee and conversation in a rather dark room that looked as if the builders hadn't quite finished vacating it. We joined, of course.

I like contributing to societies of which I am a member, so it wasn't long before I was nominated by the University of Bath to be a Trustee. At my first meeting of the Trustees I didn't much understand what was going on, but then there was no-one in charge. David Beaugeard suggested I should help

deciding who might be so nominated; one evening we went through the list of Trustees, eliminating them one by one until...

At my second meeting of the Trustees I realised I had never chaired a committee in my life; the secretary kindly provided me with a commentary to the Agenda with my responses helpfully typed out in red. It seemed all too easy. My general technique was to let everyone argue until they were tired, then get some decisions. On the whole this worked well, until the fateful meeting when we had to decide whether or not to let Stone-King have the Jenyns room. The vote was hung. I used the Chairman's vote to keep it for the BRLSI. Bob Draper gave me a miniature whisky for use at stressful times.

We would never have had the building were it not for the collections – many items of national and international importance – or what was left of them. Even so, they were an underexploited resource, hardly known outside Queen Square. As a bookish person and published scientist I know the importance of print, so I started a committee to expand awareness of the riches in the basement and make some money for the BRLSI. The BRLSI has great potential for turning its collections, with their associated stories that are so well told in the exhibitions in the rescued Jenyns room, into printed form in different formats. But that concept is desperately hard to instil. It's not too difficult to get well-known people to come and give talks and lectures – they have already done the hard work over the years and attract a ready audience. But a book, booklet, leaflet?

We sorted out permissions for copyright to publish the talks in print, but at that time the Convenors couldn't cope with it. For success we also need a 'shop front', a sales force, appropriate financial arrangements and an editorial board. These, equally, have proved very difficult to implement. The print medium may be old and traditional, but like the BRLSI it's durable and adaptable. And it's profitable.

Professor Julian Vincent