

Burney Society UK Annual General Meeting 2021

Online via Zoom: 4th September 2021, 14:00 London BST (GMT + 1)

DRAFT MINUTES

- 1. Apologies for Absence received:** Margaret Tarplee, Helen Cooper, Lucienne Boyce, Alison Daniell, Louise Bray, Cathie Harrop, Glenys Stollstorff.
- 2. Acceptance of Minutes for 2020 AGM & Extraordinary Meeting 2021.**

Proposal: to approve Draft Minutes of 2020 AGM

Proposer: Peter Sabor; Seconder: David Tregear. Carried unanimously

Proposal: to approve Draft Minutes of Extraordinary General Meeting of 14th June 2021.

Proposer: Michael Burney-Cumming; Seconder: Sophie Coulombeau. Carried unanimously.

3. Chair's Report

As I am sure with many societies and organisations, the Burney Society has turned a necessary adjustment to a more online presence into a positive innovation. We have had contact with many more Burney members during the past year, as attendance at meetings has been easier for those with access to zoom, but we hope to see others who have not been able to attend such events when we resume in-person meetings in future. We have continued with newsletters where we have highlighted events of interest to members. This year these included The North American Burney conference, and Burney papers given at ASECS, the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, as well as Adventurous Wives, an online conference at Chawton co-organised by Burney committee member Alison Daniell, which were all held with great success. They demonstrated that Burney scholarship is thriving and broadening into inter-disciplinary research, taking into account the lives and work of more Burneys than had previously been subject to scrutiny. Part of our Society's mission is to promote study of all the Burney family so this is a welcome trend. We have a worthy bursary winner this year, Catherine Pocock, and we look forward to hearing about her research in due course. And at this AGM, you will have the chance to consider Sophie Coulombeau's proposed project on Charles Burney Junior, and the Society's involvement with it as it progresses.

Although making definite plans has been frustrating, we are excited about meeting in person next year at our own conference in London, and Trudie who is the organiser, will offer an overview of plans so far at this meeting.

We are very pleased that Kerra Soker, who has agreed to stand for the important post of treasurer, is here today. We hope to continue our close relationship with the Burney Society of North America. One initiative we wish to develop further is the organisation of more joint online talks for both Societies throughout the year, following Francesca Saggini's excellent presentation at our Extraordinary General Meeting in June. We are delighted to see that the Burney Journal includes UK committee members Sophie Coulombeau, Cassie Ulph and Lorna Clarke and our patron Kate Chisholm on the Editorial Board, and our President Peter Sabor on the Advisory Board. Many congratulations to all on the latest

issue.

Cooperation with other literary societies is always rewarding. We have been fostering connections with the Johnson Society in recent years, and they have invited Burney members to join them this year at their annual Christmas event on December 11th. This consists of a wreath-laying at Dr Johnson's memorial in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey, and a luncheon which is held at the nearby St Ermin's Hotel. The luncheon speaker this year will be Professor Wood who will deliver the Richard Thrale Memorial Lecture. His subject is 'The need for friendship: Frances Burney and Samuel Johnson's non-literary relationship'. We will post further details of this shortly and all are welcome to attend.

As always, it is my pleasure to be involved in the Burney Society, and to thank committee members and our president for their hard work and time willingly given to Burney matters. The Society includes those at the start of their careers, those developing their careers and those retired and enjoying reading about the Burneys at their leisure. We are confident that we will continue to represent the interest in Burney matters shown by our members' continued support. I think we can promise everyone a fruitful and stimulating year ahead.

Miriam Al Jamil, 4 September 2021

4. Treasurer's Report

Miriam noted that in the absence of a Treasurer this report has been co-prepared by herself as Chair, and Trudie as Secretary. It covers the period 12 June 2021 – 3 September 2021. is a financial interim report.

Trudie displayed a PowerPoint slide of 'Burney Society UK Balance Sheet as of 3 September 2021' (shown below) and gave the following account:

Burney Society UK Balance Sheet as of 3 September 2021

Presented by Miriam Al Jamil and Trudie Messent as Society Chair & Secretary

FIXED ASSETS	£
External Hard Drive	42.99
CURRENT ASSETS	
Bank balance (3.9.2021)	3,804.71
Unused deposit to Foundling	120.00
Postage stamps	31.14
Name badges	8.00
ASSETS	3,963.14

Our fixed asset is the external hard drive purchased to develop a Burney Society UK digital archive, so this will be available in the future. Our current assets are our bank balance which, as of yesterday, was £3,804.71. In terms of assets that we have in consumables that have not yet been used we have £31.14 in postage stamps and some name badges from previous conference. Adding together the fixed asset and the current assets, the society assets at this point are £3,886,84.

Trudie displayed a PowerPoint slide showing 'Burney Society UK Income and Expenditure Account 13 June - 3 September 2021', as shown below.

Burney Society UK Income & Expenditure Account 13 June – 3 September 2021

Prepared by Miriam Al Jamil & Trudie Messent

	£	
Brought forward on 12 June 2021	3763.61	
Bank balance on 14 June 2021	3826.60	

INCOME

2021 -2022 Subscriptions	300.00
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EXPENDITURE

	£	
PayPal charges	4.31	
Burney Bursary (initial payment)	100.00	
External Hard drive	42.99	
Website hosting charge (August)	16.78	
June – September 2021 incurred Expenditure		164.08

2020 Burney Journal Deferred expenditure

Journals, P & P, transfer charges	329.20	
UK Postage	92.25	421.45

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

585.53

INCOME less EXPENDITURE 13 June – 3 September 2021 - 285.53 (including deferred 2020 *Burney Journal*)

Trudie explained how these figures were derived:

The balance which was brought forward by Debbie on 12th June was £3763.61. The bank balance on the 14th of June, as checked by Miriam and I was £3,826.60. Our income from subscriptions during this period was £300. Our expenditure: PayPal charges were £4.31 on part of that £300. For the Burney Bursary we have made an initial payment of £100. The external hard drive was purchased during this period so that comes under expenditure, although it will not be a recurring expense, the website hosting charge was for two months and was £16.78. Our expenditure incurred for this period was £164.08. We also had the deferred expenditure, which was incurred last year, and I am told the correct term is deferred, for the *Burney Journals*, that was their purchase, P & P from America to the UK, the bank transfer charges and the UK postage of, so that added to our three-month expenditure, brought our total expenditure over these three months to £585.53, which means that our expenditure exceeded income by £285.53 for these three months, but that was because of over £400 for the *Burney Journals* which was an expense incurred last year. Trudie invited questions and for Miriam to add any points as co-preparer.

Discussion points raised:

- PayPal charges.

Trudie stated that we are currently paying over £1 per £20 in PayPal fees, even though she had negotiated non-profit organisation rates. She noted it was possible for the payee to adopt these charges when making payment.

Deborah Kennedy commented that she found PayPal very convenient and would be willing to pay the fees in addition to the subscription.

Michael Burney- Cumming raised the option of increasing membership fees by £1.

Miriam replied that she would like to retain fees at current rate but could mention fees on the membership form.

- Deposit to Foundling Museum for 2019 cancelled AGM

Michael Burney-Cumming queried what had happened to the deposit previously paid to the Foundling hospital.

Trudie replied that this had been transferred to Foundling Museum venue hire for the 2022 AGM.

Michael Burney-Cumming queried that the 2022 AGM was not being held on Zoom for overseas members.

Trudie replied that would be held in person as it would precede the conference, but it was hoped to set up some Zoom access for members who were unable to attend. Trudie noted that they did not want to cancel altogether as the Foundling Museum had made the venue available at approximately half their current rate, even for non-profit institutions.

Michael Burney-Cumming pointed out that this should be noted on the profit and loss account as an asset. Trudie made the change immediately recording it under Current Assets as unused deposit to Foundling Museum.

-Bank charges

Michael Burney-Cumming raised the question that the only bank charges in the financial statement were for the international transfer. He mentioned that there is a drive from some of the big banks to charge people. They have done away with charity status and are putting them on business charges and the charges are quite high, something like £2 a cheque.

Kerra Soker said she had also seen press reports that some charities were surprised by changes to bank charges.

Trudie said that the previous day, Miriam and herself checked the bank statement for the last year and although there may be charges that they did not recognise as bank charges, the only bank charges found were for the international transfer.

Miriam stated she would investigate further and moved to a vote on the financial statement.

Proposal: that the financial report for the period 13 June to 3 September 2022 is accepted as accurate.

Proposer: Jill Webster Seconder: Lucy -Anne Katgely Carried unanimously.

5. Secretary's Report

The Burney Journal, Volume Seventeen, 2020 has now been posted out to all members, although by 'snail mail' to save costs. If you have not already received your copy it should arrive within the week. I would like to note that this volume has also been made available as an open access online version, by the North American Society, and the link can be found on our Facebook page. I will also load this link onto our website (burneysociety.uk) later. We were not aware of this new approach in advance but if this is to continue, we may need to discuss the option of not ordering print copies for all members, at members' choice. We will liaise with the North American Burney society to see whether they intend to continue with open access online publication.

I hope all members have received our UK Society Newsletters and would like to repeat that Miriam and I are always keen to receive items and articles for this newsletter from you. We have just received the latest *Burney Letter* from Lorna Clark and I will email this to UK members together with the registration form for the Johnson Society event.

I am grateful to Cassie Ulph and Sophie Coulombeau, and others for 'Twittering' on behalf of the Burney Society and would appeal to all Twitter members to look out for Burney Society Twitters and to re-tweet for us, particularly this year in relation to our 2022 conference.

I am co-administrator of the Burney Society UK Facebook page and would like to thank all of you who have contributed, especially the Burney Society of North America, who have been so active this year, particularly about their conference papers.

Our website burneysociety.uk is still hosted by IONOS and has been updated recently, I do it all the time. I will upload draft minutes of this meeting within the week, plus the latest 2022 conference information, which I will discuss in more detail under Agenda item 10.

Whilst addressing the *Burney Journal* envelopes I realised that I am not aware of members most up to date titles. Please forgive me if I have addressed you incorrectly. I will adapt the Membership form to include a specific space for title, but in the meantime please let me know if I am out of date, or just incorrect.

I have recently undertaken a brief geographical and 'demographic' analysis of our membership. Geographically the membership is concentrated in London and the South-east, with a few members, much valued, further north and west. Scotland, Wales, and Ireland can all boast members, as can Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and Spain. Who are our members? They include university academics, plus students and recent post-graduates. The UK membership is largely made up of individuals and couples who are interested in the Burney family, and may carry out and publish in this field, but not necessarily as part of an academic institution. Many, including myself, are retired from paid employment. This diversity is one of our strengths as a society and I would like to thank everyone for their support.

Trudie Messent, 4 September 2021

6. Bursary Co-ordinator's Report

We're delighted to announce that the recipient of the Bursary this year is Catherine Pocock. Catherine is currently completing a PhD in copyright law at Sheffield University, and wishes to pursue research into women's publishing experiences in eighteenth-century Britain, using Frances Burney as a case study. £100 has been paid upfront, and the balance of £200 will be paid once receipts have been received. Miriam has already heard her present preliminary research on *Camilla* to an interdisciplinary workshop run by the International Society for the History and Theory of Intellectual Property (ISHTIP), and we look forward to hearing more about her research in due course.

Madeleine Pelling (Bursary holder 2018) has submitted the report of her research aided by the Bursary. The report has already been disseminated to members via the newsletter. Briefly, the Bursary enabled her to study the unexplored archive of letters between the Bluestockings Mary Hamilton, Hannah More and Elizabeth Vesey, held on microfilm at the British Library, as part of her larger project 'Women and the Objects of History, c. 1700-1830'. An article based on this work has appeared in *Women's History Review*, exploring 'eighteenth-century elite and middling women's representations of Elizabeth I and Mary queen of Scots through manuscript-making and collecting' and further publications are

planned, including a journal special issue, an edited collection of essays and a journal article.

I propose that we keep the Bursary application form and process the same in the coming year, but would welcome suggestions for ways in which to disseminate it more widely, to encourage a greater number of applications.

Gillian Skinner, 4th September 2021

7. Election of Treasurer

Miriam explained we need a new treasurer after Debbie stood down in June. We have one person willing to stand for the post, but first I must ask if we have any other candidates proposed for this position. No other candidates were proposed.

Kerra Soker has the support of the committee. She has been a member for a very long time, and I have known her both at the Burney Society and the Johnson Society. You will have seen in the latest newsletter a letter from Kerra, giving her brief background and I feel she would make an excellent treasurer. Can we propose Kerra Soker for treasurer of the Burney Society UK?

Proposal: that Kerra Soker is elected as Treasurer of the Burney Society UK

Proposer: Miriam Al Jamil; Seconder: Zandra O'Donnell. Carried unanimously.

8. Election of other Officers & Committee members (by show of hands)

Miriam read out the names and roles of Officers and committee members to be elected en bloc:

Hon. President: Peter Sabor

Chair: Miriam Al Jamil

Secretary: Trudie Messent

Other committee members: Lorna Clarke (Liaison with NA Burney Society), Sophie Coulombeau, Alison Daniell (University Liaison), Lucy-Anne Katgely, Francesca Saggini, Gillian Skinner (Bursary Co-ordinator), Cassie Ulph.

Proposal: that the above officers and committee members should be elected en bloc.

Proposer: Deborah Jones; Seconder: Zandra O'Donnell. Carried unanimously

9. Sophie Coulombeau's project proposal

Sophie then introduced her proposed project with a PowerPoint presentation she had prepared: 'A Mad Rage for Possessing a Library: Charles Burney Jr's Cultures of Collection'. Dr Sophie Coulombeau, University of York.

Sophie explained the general aims of this project: This research project seeks to uncover and describe the principles, experiences, values and aesthetics of the Rev. Charles Burney Jr (1757-1817); to understand the effects and legacies of those practices today; and to investigate the ways in which such an archive can be most effectively mediated to different publics. Sophie then explained the project in more detail and set forward specific proposals for members to consider:

1. That the Burney Society agree to be a named partner in a grant application made by Sophie Coulombeau in 2022 to one or more Research Councils for the research project 'A Mad Rage to Possess A Library: Charles Burney's Cultures of Collection'.

2. That in November 2021 the Burney Society contribute £300 towards the six-month, part-time employment of a Research Assistant to enable Sophie Coulombeau to create a comprehensive database of extant correspondence to and from Charles Burney Jr.

Discussion:

Miriam asked if there were any initial questions anyone would like to put to Sophie about this project noting that is unusual and clearly something that we should be thinking about as a society.

Francesca Saggini strongly endorsed this research project as one highly deserving of support, praising the originality in combining public facing humanities and primary research. Francesca also raised the point that Sophie was a long-standing member of the committee, and committee members, by tradition, did not apply for the research bursary. Fran suggested that we should consider the possibility that committee members should have the opportunity to compete for the research bursary, or a fellowship, if this would clearly benefit their research. Fran highlighted the possibilities that Sophie's research project opens up for Burney studies at large and the contact the Society would be able to make through this research into Charles jr.

Michael Burney-Cumming raised a plea that the output being in English rather than in 'academic' and Sophie assured him this would be the case and that she wrote in academic register when appropriate but recognise the importance of a register that is accessible beyond academia. Sophie mentioned that she also wrote articles for magazines and newspapers and was a published novelist.

Miriam read out a question posed by Tim Ambrose: 'Very interesting piece of research, but no guarantee of funding from research councils. It would help to strengthen the case for financial support if the preliminary pre-application research on the database of Charles Burney's correspondence could be published regardless of the hope that the research councils and other funders come through.'

Sophie replied that she would need to think about the implications as she needed to protect the research which she had already undertaken for the last six-seven years, as could be verified by Prof Sabor.

Peter Sabor added his support to Michael's for Sophie's research which opens exploration into another Burney family member. Peter noted that there had been excellent work on many of the Burney family, obviously Frances and Charles, Susan, thanks largely to Philip Ollenson. Recently work on James, by scholars interested in the naval side of things, and research on Mrs. Meeke has been opened up thanks to Simon Macdonald. More and more of these interesting Burneys are coming to light, but Charles Junior was apparently the last survivor, virtually untouched, with the exception of a couple of articles by Ralph Walker which go back a very long way. One of these articles Peter himself had not previously known about, until he discovered it thanks to Sophie. That there has been virtually nothing on Charles (Jr) is really surprising, just as Sophie says, he is a fascinating figure and really rich for further exploration and Peter stated that it is wonderful that finally, after all these years, somebody, namely Sophie, is ready to take up the challenge and take a good look at the extraordinary man, Charles Junior. Peter noted that this as a fantastic project and we should all be glad and rejoice that Sophie has got the courage to take it on. It will certainly be a huge amount of work, 2,000 letters being a very, very impressive numbers, somewhat larger than the surviving number of letters of Charles senior, to and from, that is running to six volumes in the current edition which is ongoing. Peter noted that letters were just one aspect of Charles Junior, it is his collections which make him so fascinating, and Peter stated that he very strongly endorsed support of this project.

Sophie thanked Fran, Michael and Peter and drew attention to a question Deborah Kennedy had posted in the chat: 'In regard to the first proposal, what are the obligations or responsibilities involved if the Burney Society (UK) were named and official partner in the grant applications?' Sophie confirmed that agreeing to be named as a stake holder in the grant application does not commit the society to any obligations.

Miriam asked how many other stake holders were anticipated.

Sophie stated that she was coming to the Burney Society relatively early in the stage, the only other institutions with which I have had firm conversations with are the British Library, St Paul's Deptford, and one or two other smaller archives. Sophie is also keen to involve other holders of Charles Burney archives, such as Charterhouse, the British Museum, Cambridge University and Beinecke Library, at Yale, amongst others.

Vote on Sophie's proposals

1. That the Burney Society agree to be a named partner in a grant application made by Sophie Coulombeau in 2022 to one or more Research Councils for the research project 'A Mad Rage to Possess A Library: Charles Burney's Cultures of Collection'.

Proposer: Zandra O'Donnell; Seconder: Deborah Jones. Carried unanimously

2. That in November 2021 the Burney Society contribute £300 towards the six-month, part-time employment of a Research Assistant to enable Sophie Coulombeau to create a comprehensive database of extant correspondence to and from Charles Burney Jr.

Proposer: Trudie Messent; Seconder: Francesca Saggini. Carried unanimously

10. 2022 AGM & 2022 Conference

Trudie displayed PowerPoint slide on AGM, reading the text as follows:

The 2022 Burney Society UK AGM will be held on Saturday 11th June at the Foundling Museum, London, from 14:00 – 17:00 BST (GMT +1), to include at least one lecture and access to the Foundling Museum exhibition rooms. Attendance at this AGM, including refreshments, is free of charge and all are welcome.

Trudie put up a PowerPoint presentation on the Burney Society UK 2022 London Conference, planned for 12 -13 June 2022 with the proposed title, 'Windows on the Burneys & their legacy.'

The first day, Sunday 12th June, will be held at the Foundling Museum, and the second day, Monday 13th June, at St Bride Foundation, prior to Evensong and a wreath laying in Westminster Abbey to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the unveiling of the stained-glass window to commemorate Frances Burney.

Trudie stated that whilst it was anticipated the full fee for the two day conference, to include lunch and refreshments would be £140, a 50% reduction for students would seem desirable, however, whilst it was expected that much of this reduction could be absorbed within the overall budget, it seemed advisable to ask members to vote to agree to contribute society funds up to the sum of £700 towards this student reduction, if it could not be absorbed within the conference budget.

Proposal: that the members agree to the use of society funds to subsidise a conference fee reduction for student delegates, to the extent this cannot be absorbed in the conference budget, to a maximum of £700.

Proposer: Francesca Saggini: Seconder: Debbie. Carried unanimously

11. A.O.B

1. Online banking access

Miriam raised the need for a vote to enable online banking access for the Secretary, Trudie Messent, who is now a signatory on the bank but needs member endorsement to apply for online access to the society bank account. Miriam also noted that whilst the AGM of 14 June 2021 had endorsed that the newly appointed Treasurer could be made a signatory to the society bank account, we needed a further vote for members to endorse that the newly appointed Treasurer, Kerra Soker is endorsed for access to online banking on the society account.

Proposal: that members present in this meeting authorize the incumbent Chair, Secretary and Treasurer of the Burney Society UK to access the Burney Society business account using the NatWest Digital banking and Direct banking in accordance with the NatWest Digital banking and Direct banking terms.

Proposer: Debbie Seconder: Francesca. Carried unanimously No against, no abstentions.

2. Bench at Chawton House.

Michael Burney Cumming raised a question about the Burney bench at Chawton House for which donations were raised from members.

Trudie replied she is arranging to have the money transferred. Chawton House have promised the bench will be in situ no later than June 2022 and Tuesday the 14 June 2022 has been provisionally booked for unveiling of the bench.

3. Hester Thrale Piozzi bicentenary conference, 23 - 25 September. 17:00 – 21:00 BST

Sophie Coulombeau, co-organiser of this conference, invited members to register for this free online conference which incorporates a new play and several papers of interest to Burney members. The link for conference registration is below

https://ucla.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_rbS-hbbqToOWAuYxPaWXnQ

4. Radio Play

Trudie invited Sian to give details of her radio play.

Sian explained she translated and adapted 'Les Liaisons Dangereuse', from the French in letter form, and it is the current classic serial on Radio 4. The first episode was broadcast last week, and the second tomorrow, available for a year internationally on BBC Sounds.

END OF AGM 15:42 BST

The AGM was followed by a Talk by Prof. Maurizio Ascari: 'Monumentalisation of Dr. Burney in Westminster Abbey - A Study in Strategy'. We hope to make this talk available to members in some form in due course, with the permission of Prof Ascari.