

The Kipling Society (Registered Charity No. 278885) – Annual Report 2018/19

Address: Bay Tree House, Doomsday Garden, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 6LB

Trustees as at 30 June 2018

Mike Kipling (Chair and Treasurer)
Alastair Wilson (Deputy Chair)
Fiona Renshaw (Membership Secretary)
Alex Bubb (Meetings Secretary)
Jan Montefiore (Editor of the Kipling Journal)
John Radcliffe (Online Editor and Publicity)
Linda Burton (Bateman's Liaison Officer)
Ray Beck
Mary Hamer
Anne Harcombe
Julia Hett
Jane Keskar
Sharad Keskar

Also a trustee during year: John Lambert (resigned October 2018)

The Society is governed by its Rules, approved by the Charities Commission in 1999 and amended at the AGM on 10 September 2014.

As set out in the Rules, the objective of the Society is the advancement of public education by the promotion of the study and appreciation of the life and works of Rudyard Kipling.

The main activities in furtherance of this aim are :

- (a) to print, publish and issue quarterly (or at such other intervals as the Council of the Society may from time to time determine) a magazine entitled The Kipling Journal devoted to matters of interest to readers and students of Kipling.
- (b) to promote and hold lectures, discussions and meetings, and generally to encourage the study of Kipling's life and writings.
- (c) for the purposes of education and study, to maintain a library comprising Kipling's works, the works of writers on Kipling, and other material (in any form or medium) relating to Kipling.
- (d) to provide speakers on Kipling's life and works for suitable functions organised otherwise than by the Society
- (e) to employ any electronic or other form of information technology to store, process or provide information about Kipling, the Society and its activities.
- (f) to give assistance and advice regarding Kipling's life and works and on the organisation of any suitable function dealing with them.

In pursuing these objectives, the Trustees have had due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit.

Achievements and performance

Individual members: The current total is 378, up 6 overall since July 2018. Over the course of the past year, 25 new members joined, 3 ex-members rejoined, 21 members left the Society and 1

member was re-classified as a corporate member. The majority (70%) of individual members are UK-based.

Corporate members: The current total is 76, down 2 overall since July of last year. Over the course of the past 12 months, 3 corporate members failed to renew their subscriptions and 1 member was moved from the individual to the corporate members' list. Two thirds of our corporate members are based in the USA or Canada and most (70%) subscribe via agencies.

The Society held its normal programme of five London speaker meetings in 2018/19. Each was preceded by an e-mailed Chairman's Newsletter. The Annual Luncheon was attended by 46 members and guests. The speaker was Professor Daniel Karlin.

Four excellent editions of the Journal were produced. The 'Writing with Kipling' competition for primary school children was again run, attracting a record 202 entries from eight schools.

Last year, when students at Manchester University overpainted the words of 'If' on their Union building wall and replaced it with a poem by Maya Angelou, we succeeded in having letters or articles published in several national newspapers pointing out that 'If' was a poem that Angelou had said was an inspiration to her at a bad time in her life.

A particular delight earlier was for the Chairman to be invited to unveil the magnificent Kipling sculpture in Burwash High Street. The ceremony attracted local TV, radio and newspaper coverage.

There were some 50,000 visitors to the web-site, of which some 12,000 visited the New Readers' Guide pages. The total number of visitors since launch in May 1993 is just over 1.4m. In the past twelve months there were 32 requests for membership via the site, where people are now commonly paying subscriptions on-line.

We also completed the transcription of Carrie Kipling's diaries which are now available to all to view on-line. We have started work on transcribing Kipling's motoring diaries.

Our library in The Kipling Room at Haileybury and Imperial Service College is open to students at Haileybury, but visits by researchers and others from the rest of the world have been fewer than last year, most researchers relying on a question to Council members or one of the discussion lists. A gift of paperback editions, in excellent unread condition have been made available to boarders at Haileybury, based in Kipling House. They are from the family of a past member. We intend to keep this stock fresh and fairly complete.

Support to researchers, to members and to the general public continues at an average of three queries per week, almost all by email. It has been a year of many excited questions about 'unusual found volumes' and 'hand-written copies of poems, signed by Kipling' perhaps reflecting the likely ages of fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, whose collections are being passed on.

Financial review

The Society's Accounts are prepared in respect of Calendar years and those for 2018 were published in the June 2019 edition of the journal.

The Society's net assets reduced by a little over £3,000 in the year to December 2018. The main items of additional expenditure were a fifth edition of the Journal and a donation of £1,000 towards the Kipling statue at Burwash. There was also a decline of about £800 in subscription income.

Other donations made were £500 to the Barn Theatre Company Cirencester (for a production of *The Jungle Book*) and £100 to the Royal British Legion (for placing wreaths on John Kipling's grave at Loos).

The Society's investments are (as of March 2019) mainly held in a one-year term Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) account administered by Shawbrook Bank and a two-year charity account with United Trust Bank. A further £4,461 remains in the CCLA charity account where it is instantly accessible.

While applying for gift aid in respect of subscriptions paid in 2017, it was noted that only about one third of UK members were registered as gift aid donors to the Society. The remaining members were contacted by letter or email, with the result that the proportion of gift aid donors has now risen to two thirds of UK members.

Reserving policy

As at 31 December 2018, the Society held as earmarked reserves amounts of £3,376 and £19,060 being respectively the balances of donations made by former members John Slater and Eileen Stammers-Smith. These funds are earmarked respectively for the financing of children's writing competitions and public lectures relating to Rudyard Kipling.

No use was made of the Eileen Stammers-Smith Memorial Lecture Fund during the year but the John Slater Essay Competition Fund was used to provide awards associated with the Writing with Kipling project.

The Society also had general reserves of £44,037, amounting to approximately two years of expenditure at current levels. The Trustees have not specified a particular target for general reserves and are content either for them to remain around current levels or to gradually reduce should appropriate uses be found for their expenditure.