

The Kipling Society (Registered Charity No. 278885) – Annual Report 2021/22

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

Trustees at 30 June 2022

Jan Montefiore (Chair and Editor of the Kipling Journal)

Angela Eyre (Deputy Chair)

Alex Bubb (Meetings Secretary)

David Forsyth (Bateman's Liaison Officer)

Mike Kipling (Secretary and Treasurer)

John Radcliffe (Online Editor and Publicity)

Fiona Renshaw (Membership Secretary)

John Walker (Librarian)

Mary Hamer

Richard Howell

Sarah LeFanu

Christopher Morrison

Kaori Nagai

Alastair Wilson

The Society is governed by its Rules, approved by the Charities Commission in 1999 and amended at the AGMs in September 2014 and July 2019.

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: As of 15 June, there were 404 individual members, a net increase of four overall since the same date last year. Over the course of the year we have welcomed 45 new members and a total of 41 existing members have left the Society for a variety of reasons. Since the new student membership category was introduced in July 2020, we have welcomed 16 student members, most of them being located in the UK. We currently have 13 student members.

Lord Williams of Oystermouth, former Archbishop of Canterbury and very knowledgeable Kipling enthusiast, accepted our invitation to become an honorary member of the Society in 2022. It is a long time since we last awarded this status to anyone, and there is no more deserving a recipient than Rowan Williams, as anyone who attended the 2017 annual luncheon and heard his entirely without notes address 'Kipling and Dreams' will testify. He was also elected a Vice-President at the 2022 AGM.

Corporate members: The current total is 63, down one since 15 June last year, one North American university having failed to renew its subscription for 2022 without explanation.

Following an on-line only AGM in June 2021 at which Adrian Munsey spoke about and illustrated the making of his documentary film *Rudyard Kipling: A Secret Life*, we welcomed members back to our usual pre-Covid venue, the Royal Over-Seas League, in September for the Stammers-Smith Memorial lecture, which was delivered remotely from New Zealand by Professor Harry Ricketts, one of our Vice-Presidents. As with all our in-person meetings this year, members were also able to join on-line, an option which proved popular and enabled members from around the country and the globe to participate. We had two more 'hybrid' meetings, and also held a very successful on-line only meeting in April, hosted by our Honorary Archivist Toby Parker from the Society's library at Haileybury School, at which Toby, John Walker our Librarian and some of our members were able to share their Kipling 'treasures' with everyone. In addition, two on-line Kipling reading events were held, one in December and one in May, both curated by our Chair, Jan Montefiore.

We were also, finally, able to hold the 'Kipling in the News' conference at City University. This was also hybrid in format and worked very well with participants from around the world. Only those attending in person could enjoy the pizza at the conference dinner however! We were also pleased to be able to award prizes for the best papers.

Five editions of the Journal were produced, including a special edition containing key papers from the 'Kipling in the News' conference. Five editions of the e-mail newsletter were also produced.

After several years of tremendous effort on the part of our John Radcliffe, On-line editor, and software consultant Michael Wilcox, we were able to launch our new Wordpress platform in November 2021. This is a great addition to the Society's online presence, and we are most grateful to John and Michael for masterminding it. The usage of the website has increased markedly, currently varying between 2000 and 3000 views a day. Within the new section on Kipling Studies, we have established the 'Profiles' page, currently covering over sixty writers and academics in the field. There are probably at least 40 more to be listed, including many researchers in universities around the world yet to be located.

Council has adopted a policy on racially offensive language in Kipling's works. In most cases, we have included a 'trigger warning' at the beginning of each page on our website that contains what is euphemistically termed 'the n-word', as well as a general warning on potentially offensive language (and a link to our policy) on the home page. For works we specifically promote for children's reading, we have removed the word in a seamless fashion, merely adding in the background notes that offensive terminology has been edited out. We have not flagged or edited the pdfs of the past copies of the *Kipling Journal*. Our Facebook page, hosted by our Librarian, continues to attract lively interest. There are also over 100 regular users of the Mailbase discussion group.

The second John McGivering competition for writers of any age was held. The brief was stories on the theme of animals which also engaged with Kipling. 23 entries were received, all of a very high standard, including several from children. It was no easy matter for the judges to select the winners,

and the first prize was awarded jointly. The winning entries will be published in the December 2022 edition of the Journal, after which we will put them up on our website.

Financial review

The Society's Accounts are prepared in respect of calendar years. Those for 2021 were published in the June 2022 edition of the Kipling Journal. The Society's net assets reduced by around £8,500 in the year to December 2021. This was largely due to expenditure on redeveloping the website on a WordPress platform, which was successfully completed during the year.

The Society's investments are mainly held in two charity term accounts with United Trust Bank, maturing in 2022 and 2023. A further amount remains in a CCLA charity account where it is instantly accessible.

There has been no material change to the Society's financial position since 31 December 2021.

Reserving policy

At 31 December 2021, the Society held as earmarked reserves amounts of £2,904 and £17,940 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.

The Eileen Stammers-Smith Memorial Lecture Fund was used in 2021 to meet travel costs to the 'Kipling in the News' conference and also to make a small gift to the 2021 Stammers-Smith memorial lecturer. The John Slater Essay Competition Fund was not used in 2021.

The Society also had general reserves of £39,745 amounting to more than two years of expenditure at normal 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.