

THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF MEDIEVAL LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

(Registered Charity, no. 1130022)

c/o History Faculty, George Street, Oxford, OX1 2RL

Members of the Executive Committee and Trustees of the Society:

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 Prof. Jane Roberts (Institute of English Studies, London), Vice-President  
 Dr Sethina Watson (University of York), Vice-President, Hon. Secretary  
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All queries about this Annual Report or enquiries about the Society should be directed to the Executive Officer, at [ssmll@history.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ssmll@history.ox.ac.uk)

## THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF MEDIEVAL LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE ANNUAL REPORT 2020

### Overview of Activities in 2020

Recognising the challenges posed to medieval studies by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Society not only maintained but expanded its core support with a range of new offerings: research bursaries to fund digital scanning of manuscripts in the absence of physical access to libraries; grants for online conferences; the introduction of colour manuscript images to the journal; the launch of Kindle (E-pub) editions of monographs together with an increase in the tempo of monographs publication – including the physically largest monograph ever published by the Society (!); and, in September, *DarkArchives 20/20* (<https://darkarchiv.es>), an online-only sequel to the physical conference held in 2019, again jointly run with Oxford Medieval Studies – with over 750 registrants from as far afield from the UK as Stanford and Shanxi, it was the most widely attended medieval event in the Society's history (if not the University's).

### Journal

The ninetieth volume of *Medium Ævum* appeared in its customary two issues in print and online, in mid- and late 2020, with the second marking the debut of colour printing for manuscript images. The team continued without change, consisting of the Editors, Profs Sylvia Huot, Nigel F. Palmer and Corinne Saunders, with Mrs Jackie Pritchard serving as Assistant Editor, Mrs Val Lamb in charge of typesetting, and Ms Hannah Piercey as Editorial Assistant.

### Monographs

There was a bumper crop of three new monographs: Elizabeth Robinson's *Remorse and Entreaty: An Edition of some Vernacular Confessional Prayers in Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts* (<https://aevum.space/NS35>); Alastair Minnis' *Hellish Imaginations from Augustine to Dante: An Essay in Metaphor and Materiality* (<https://aevum.space/NS36>), also the first MÆ Monograph to be published in the Kindle (e-pub) format; and Donald Prudlo's edition of *Summa contra hereticos ad Petrum Martyrem attributa* (<https://aevum.space/NS38>), the monumental work's first ever printing, necessitating a coffee-table-book sized format to accommodate it. Three to four new publications are also due in 2021, from which time MÆ monographs will join *Medium Ævum* journal in being available via JSTOR. The Monographs Editors remained Prof. Anthony J. Lappin and Dr K. P. Clarke, while Prof.s Julia Boffey, Jane Roberts and Nigel Palmer remained as Responsible Editors for particular volumes, and Dr Stephen Pink oversaw production.

### Financial Support for Medieval Studies

Even as physical access to the libraries ceased, the Society was pleased to allow previous Research Travel Bursary awardees to divert funds to obtaining digital scans, or to reschedule trips for any dates until the end of 2021, as well as to give its first grants for digital scanning. The following new awards were made:

Name	Status	Subject
Barbara Crostini	Uppsala University (Adjunct Lecturer)	<i>John Geometres, In passionem Jesu Christi (BHG 418z): Critical edition with commentary and English translation</i>
Kathryn Peak	DPhil candidate, St Cross College, Oxford	<i>The fourteenth and fifteenth century reception and transmission of De Consolatione Philosophiae in England</i>



(Further details of Research Travel Bursary awards, including research reports, are available at <http://aevum.space/bursaries>)

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Society also made the following conference awards:

Conference	Venue	Scheduled Dates (2020)
Polyphonic Communities: Ways of Belonging in the Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World	Exeter College, Oxford	5 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> June 2020
Medieval Cultures: Conversations and Confrontations	University of Reading	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2020

With physical conferences then rendered impossible by COVID-19 on any scale, however, the Society suspended its physical grants application system, while at the end of 2020 launching support for online conferences. It hopes to re-open applications for physical conference funding, depending on the easing of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021. As with bursaries, the Society has committed to honour all such grants to be used for rescheduled events, for dates up until the end of 2021.

(Further details of conference grants are available at <http://aevum.space/conferences>)

### Governance

The Society's Trustees Committee followed the established pattern of meeting on three occasions: in January, May and September. The meetings (online, rather than physically in Oxford), were chaired by the President, Prof. Jane Taylor. The Committee, in its meetings, oversaw the Society's activities in line with the Society's Constitution and established Policies. The Committee appointed Prof. Lesley Smith to be its new Honorary Treasurer, and Dr Sethina Watson to be its new Honorary Secretary. The day-to-day running and technical development of Society activities remained the duty of the Executive Officer, Dr Stephen Pink. The Society welcomed a new EA, Ms Kathryn Peak, from whom the EO received invaluable support. While the timing of the Covid-19 pandemic forced the Society to cancel its planned AGM for 2020, it will instead ratify 2020 AGM business at an AGM in 2021.

### Financial Overview and Outlook for 2020

The Society posted a small financial surplus of a few hundred pounds in 2020 for the first time in many years, with membership expanding together with services, monographs income rising, the journal more widely read now than ever in a range of formats, physical and digital, and operating costs kept low. The major challenge over the next couple of years is likely to be one of institutional subscribers to the journal continuing to navigate both temporary closures of their libraries due to COVID-19, and the shift in demand from physical to online formats that COVID-19 has clearly accelerated. However, the trustees are aware of the need to ensure the financial stability of the Society, and are actively considering means to capitalise on its intellectual property. The Society looks well placed to meet these challenges, with low-risk bonds and investment account holdings of over £100,000, guaranteeing its operations, grants and agendas in the immediate and longer term.

# Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature

(registered charity no. 1130022)

## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS for the CALENDAR YEAR 2020

	2020	2019
	£	£
<b>Summary of Accounts</b>		
<b>Balance by Activity</b>		
<i>Medium Aevum</i> Journal	6,115	8,806
Monographs	2,643	800
Conferences and Events	(800)	(7,204)
Society	(8,719)	(7,903)
Interest & Yields	1,028	1,007
<b>Impact on Reserves</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>(4,493)</b>
<b>Accumulated funds</b>		
Carried forward	104,301	108,794
Surplus for year	267	(4,493)
Post-accounts alteration		
<b>Total to carry forward</b>	<b>104,568</b>	<b>104,301</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>		
National Savings Income Bond	50,000	50,000
National Savings Investment (designated funds)	54,486	54,017
At Bank / Paypal	82	284
Post-accounts alteration		
	<b>104,568</b>	<b>104,301</b>
<b>Individual Activities</b>		
<i>Medium Aevum</i> Journal	2020	2019
<b>Receipts</b>		
Subscriptions / Backsales	13,547	13,831
Electronic Royalties	4,237	5,984
Adverts and Permissions	0	1,826
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,783</b>	<b>21,642</b>
<b>Payments</b>		
Production	7,806	8,000
Editorial Postage	263	26
Assistant Editor	3,200	4,010
Typesetter / Editorial Help	400	800
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,669</b>	<b>12,836</b>
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>6,115</b>	<b>8,806</b>

	Monographs	2020	2019
<b>Receipts</b>			
Sales and Subventions		3,961	1,250
<b>Total</b>		<u>3,961</u>	<u>1,250</u>
<b>Payments</b>			
Production and Development		1,318	450
Readers / various		0	0
<b>Total</b>		<u>1,318</u>	<u>450</u>
<b>Surplus</b>		<u>2,643</u>	<u>800</u>
	Conferences and Events	2020	2019
<b>Payments</b>			
Events Sponsorship		800	2,690
Oxford Medieval Graduate Conference		0	1,219
AGM and other Society Events		0	1,295
DarkArchives 19 Subvention		0	2,000
<b>Total</b>		<u>800</u>	<u>7,204</u>
<b>Surplus</b>		<u>(800)</u>	<u>(7,204)</u>
	Society	2020	2019
<b>Receipts</b>			
Membership		5,356	4,623
<b>Total</b>		<u>5,356</u>	<u>4,623</u>
<b>Payments</b>			
Expenses to Trustees		68	242
Executive Officer		9,624	5,323
Executive Assistant		816	1,234
Website Development, and other IT Services		1,315	731
Accounting		700	570
Other Office Costs (Stationery &c)		56	245
Essay Prize		0	1,252
Publicity		109	166
Bank & Paypal Charges		481	738
Research Travel Bursaries		907	2,025
<b>Total</b>		<u>14,075</u>	<u>12,525</u>
<b>Surplus</b>		<u>(8,719)</u>	<u>(7,903)</u>





CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Charity Name

The Society for the Study of Medieval Languages & Literature

On accounts for the year  
ended

31st December 2020

Charity no  
(if any)

1130022

Set out on pages

4-5

(references to include the page number(s) of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above  
charity ("the Trust") for the year ended

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the  
accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011  
("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out  
under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I  
have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission  
under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent  
examiner's statement

~~[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to  
undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of  
applicable listed body]]. Delete [ ] if not applicable.~~

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have  
come to my attention in connection with the examination (~~other than that  
disclosed below.~~\*) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material  
respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130  
of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements  
concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities  
(Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement  
that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter  
considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection  
with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in  
order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Date:

29/10/21

Name:

Mrs Karen McDonald

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body

AAT