

## The Lewis Carroll Society - Chair's Report for 2025

### AGM - 14 November 2025

Good evening, Let me begin by thanking the Secretary for agreeing to chair this AGM. Since, at the end of this meeting, I will be standing down as a Trustee and Chair, it seemed as good a time as any to hand over to one of my colleagues who will be running the Society's affairs going forward.

It seems difficult to believe that only two years ago, we were meeting on Zoom to discuss the potential winding-up of our 50-plus-year-old Society. Happily, as we know, that didn't happen and, today, I can report that we have made great strides – particularly over the past twelve months – progress that I very much hope will continue to grow and, so, further our reach to the ever-increasing, world-wide company of scholars, collectors and enthusiasts who study or simply enjoy the work of Lewis Carroll, as well as hundreds of devotees of all things Alician!

Over the last year, the Society has been involved in many events arranged by ourselves as well as those organised by others. As I reported in my last Chair's Report, the Society had successfully acquired – at a charity auction to benefit Sobell House Hospice – one of a series of sculptured Oxen, ours painted by Oxford artist Caroline Ritson and titled 'Looking for Alice'. To secure our Ox's future, ownership was passed to the Westgate Shopping Centre, where it was formally unveiled on 27 January 2025. Trustee, Mark Davies – who was a prime mover in our acquisition of the bovine artwork will be presenting 'Looking for Alice' with Caroline Ritson after the business of this AGM.

At the beginning of April, Trustees and Society members visited Christ Church Library for a celebration of the recently-donated Jon A. Lindseth Lewis Carroll Collection and to view a display of selected gems from what is an amazing hoard. The Society formally congratulated the College Librarians on acquiring such a prestigious collection and extended our grateful thanks to Mr Lindseth for his generous gift to all Carrollian scholars.

In May, members paid a weekend visit to the Hampshire village of Lyndhurst – where Alice Hargreaves (*nee* Liddell) lived following her marriage. Events included a talk, 'Alice in Lyndhurst', a guided walk and a visit to the New Forest Heritage Centre which has a related display in honour of Lewis Carroll's muse.

The 4 July saw this year's Alice's Day held (as always in and across Oxford) with the Society providing three talks at the Bodleian's Weston Library: Mark Davies – who is our representative on the organising committee – talked with Caroline Ritson about the Alice Ox; Willaim Hale and Tom Duckham from Christ Church Library discussed the Lindseth Lewis Carroll Collection; and LCS member, Joe Cheal, spoke about his book, *Alice and the Gramophone Discovery*.

An in-person meeting took place at The Art Workers' Guild in London on 5 September exploring the topic of 'Lewis Carroll and Stammering' with speakers Vivien Grant-Jones, Speech and Language Therapist from the City Literary Institute in Holborn talking about the condition and LCS Trustee and fellow Speech and Language Therapist (*retired*) Sarah Stanfield speaking on the impact that stammering had on Lewis Carroll and his family.

During the year, under the editorship of Mark Davies, we have published four issues of the Society's newsletter, *Bandersnatch* filled with news and reviews, the most recent being issue 199 – meaning that a bicentennial *Bandersnatch* will soon come whiffing out of the Tulgey Wood! Additionally, last month, members will have received the latest – *fortieth* – issue of our journal, *The Carrollian*. Edited by Jane Skelly, it offers fifty-plus pages of scholarly erudition.

On social media we have seen the number of people reading the LCS Facebook page more than double to an amazing 10,000 Followers. The page is your best daily-guide for all Carroll and Alice updates... About new plays (ballets, operas, musicals), films, TV and radio programmes; about new editions of *Wonderland* and *Looking-Glass* and books about Mr Carroll and Mr Dodgson their lives and works. There's also information on all manner of collectables and ephemeral on-line and in-print references to Carroll characters and quotes. Plus: a weekly tribute to the work of a particular Alice illustrator, artist or craftsperson. The success of the LCS Facebook is entirely due to the day-in-day-out industry of my co-Administrators, Alice Chapman and Franziska Kohlt.

The Society continues its close relations with sister organisations, among them The Lewis Carroll Society of

North America, The Lewis Carroll Genootschap in Holland and The Lewis Carroll Society d'Italia. Mark Davies has continued to represent the Society by attending events relating to our membership of The Alliance of Literary Societies.

I must thank the Trustees and Officers – Secretary Steve Kimminau, Treasurer Tracy Gribble and the aforementioned Mark Davies (unofficial Deputy Chair and slave-of-all-work) – for all they have achieved since our last AGM, especially during my prolonged periods of illness and hospitalisation over the last eighteen months which severely inhibited my ability to discharge my full responsibilities.

In stepping down as a Trustee, I want to thank my fellow retiree, Sarah Stanfield – long-serving Trustee, Committee member and past Chair – for her dedicated service to the work of the Society over many years. After 53 years of involvement – *man and boy* – and with the experience gained while holding roles from Secretary to President and then back to Chair, I know how much is involved in running a literary society and I sincerely wish my colleagues a full measure of vision, inspiration, stamina and endurance to keep the 56-year-old Lewis Carroll Society alive and thriving until she reaches her Sixtieth Glorious Year and – hopefully – far, far, beyond.

If you do, then you will have much frabjous joy in sharing with others your knowledge in and appreciation of our beloved author and his rich literary legacy.

## The Lewis Carroll Society balance sheet 2025

The Lewis Carroll Society					
Balance Sheet					
<b>Year ended 30 September 2025</b>					
		2025			2024
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		0		0	
<b>Current Assets</b>					
Debtors/accrued income	0			0	
Nat West Current a/c old 574	11686			1708	
Nat West Current a/c new 300	2074			0	
Cambridge & Counties	0			12467	
HTB	3750			0	
PayPal	24			0	
Cash in hand	0	17534		0	14175
Total Assets		17534			14175
<b>Less Current Liabilities</b>		0		0	
<b>Balance</b>		17534		14175	

Brought forward	14175			14622	
Surplus/loss for the year	3360			-737	
Carry forward	17535			13885	
Ellis Hillman Award	0	17534		290	14175

## The Lewis Carroll Society Income and Expenditure 2025

<b>The Lewis Carroll Society</b>					
<b>Income and Expenditure Account</b>					
<b>Year ended 30 September 2025</b>					
		<i>2025</i>			<i>2024</i>
<b>Income</b>					
Subscriptions		5293			4543
Gift Aid		0			0
Donations		161			1300
Sales inc P&P		386			433
Events		0			100
Bank reimbursement & compensation		405			0
Interest		508			471
		6753			6847
<b>Less Expenditure</b>					
Publications & postage	2410			1857	
IT	603			1579	
General expenses	25			227	
Meeting costs	0			417	
Insurance	142			142	
Emory Down plaque	90			0	
ALS subscription	15			15	
PayPal commission	108			92	
Suspicious direct debit	0			255	
Oxford Ox	0	3393		3000	7584
Surplus/loss for the year		3360			-737