

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

at the *Relais de la Haute Sambre*

Lobbès, 20 May 2022

Agenda of the 2022 Annual General Meeting

1. Approval of the minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting (p.m.)
2. Committee members' report
3. Treasurer's report and accounts as on December 31st, 2021
4. Auditor's report
5. Election of the Committee members and the officers until the next AGM
6. Appointment of an auditor until the next AGM
7. Approval of the annual subscriptions for members and associate members
8. Approval of the Committee's recommendations for the donation of association funds to the National Trust in Britain
9. Any other business

Jan Grauls, Chairman

Leo Nollet, Secretary

This AGM was attended by 21 NTAB members.

*Before moving to the formal agenda, the president invited members to **pay their respects to René Lock**, who passed away in March 2020, at the start of the first lockdown after a long fight against cancer. The funeral then took place in silence, in the absence of his family and friends, a situation imposed by the pandemic.*

On September 3, 2021, the Chairman represented our association at the memorial service for René at the Protestant Temple in Mons.

René belonged to the generation of 'founding fathers' of our association and was for many years our treasurer. He was a dedicated and enthusiastic member.

The memorial service was a dignified ceremony with beautiful readings and songs, and a most moving farewell homily.

On behalf of all our members, the Chairman offered Hansje, René's wife, as well as his son Léon and his son in law Jean-Dominique our heartfelt condolences and assured them that René will continue to live on in our memories.

1. Approval of the minutes of the previous AGM in 2021 (P.M.)

Members were reminded that the minutes of the previous AGM at the *Bouillon Blanc* garden on 9 July 2021 were approved through a written consultation.

They were mailed to all attendees on 14 September 2021 and posted on the NTAB website (see: homepage > [downloads](#)).

2. Committee members' report presented by Jan Grauls, Chairman

Since our last AGM in July 2021, the easing and later the ending of the covid restrictions allowed our association to offer again a traditional programme of activities, such as visits to gardens or historic places of interest. Only the end-of-year visit to Bozar and the reception at the British Ambassador's residence in December had to be cancelled due to a temporary flare-up of the covid pandemic.

The **resumption of our normal activities** after the summer seems to have been welcomed by our membership, since all our activities were well attended. In September we visited the citadel of Dinant and the Freÿr Castle, and in October we discovered the treasures of Belgium's oldest town Tongeren. In November we learned a lot about the Bruges' historic relationship with England and Scotland during a visit of the English convent and the Adornes Estate. Last February we visited Antwerp, where we were welcomed at the Plantin-Moretus printers' workshop and had an unforgettable guided tour of the Carolus-Borromeus Church, including a fascinating behind-the-scenes tour. In March we discovered the Park Abbey near Leuven and visited the Beguinage and the University Library, where we were shown centuries-old documents about the relationship between the Leuven University and England. And last month we had an enchanting walk in the Hallerbos which displays at that time of the year its spectacular carpet of bluebells; the day ended with a lambic beer tasting at a local brewery. And on the day the AGM was held we gathered in the Hainaut province for visits of the heritage in Thuin and Lobbes.

The chairman thanked our programme coordinator André Ceulemans, and all those involved in the practical organization of our outings for the considerable their time and energy they spent organizing all these visits and for their enthusiasm in doing so.

As another sign of our going back to our traditional activities, the Committee decided to organize a **trip to the UK**. Northern Ireland was chosen as our next destination. A group of 28 NTAB members will leave on 7 June for a 6-day visit.

Here Johan Vanbrabant as well as Margaret du Maine-Simpson deserved a special word of appreciation for preparing this trip in not always ideal circumstances, but they managed to make the ends meet.

During the past year we also kept in touch with the membership through regular **Newsletters** and our renewed [website](#). The chairman invited all our members to read the blog section in particular (home page > [blog](#)), where they can find short reports on our outings. The chairman reminded the membership that this blog is open for suggestions regarding our future activities, but added that not all members seem to have discovered this feature. As was noted last year already, a good number of members (and also non-members) visit our website, but even more visitors would be welcome. Since last year we also have a [Facebook page](#), which interestingly has resulted in a number of new memberships.

Our webmaster Johan and Janet Middleton (FB) deserve to be mentioned here. The chairman thanked them on your behalf of all members.

The chairman also encouraged the participants to contribute to our Facebook page and to the blog.

Our **membership** is slightly on the increase (see the Treasurer's report). This confirms that we have a loyal and committed membership.

Since our last AGM, the **Committee** has met four times. (June, August, October and April). No changes have taken place in its composition. Margaret du Maine-Simpson asked to be discharged of her mandate as Treasurer, while she is willing to remain a member of the Committee (see also under point 3).

3. Treasurer's report and accounts as on December 31st, 2021 presented by Margaret du Maine-Simpson, Treasurer

Income & Expenditure

There is a slight increase in income from membership, which reflects the increase in the number of members since last year. The membership on 31st December stood at 124 (2020: 116). Interestingly, this is a return to the same number as in 2019.

Income from events showed a slow start, as we were still unable to hold physical events at the beginning of the year. Virtual events, while reasonably "attended", did not reach the same level of income as the normal ones. Once physical meetings became possible, we made better progress.

The basic costs of the website have now settled to a more acceptable level, but in 2021 we added a blog to the site, which is slowly gaining fame. This significantly added to the cost, on a one-time basis.

Personal note from Margaret

I hope you will find that I have carried out my task in a satisfactory manner, but I would draw your attention to the need to find a successor for the task I have been carrying out for 10 years, and which I intend to resign at the end of 2022.

Margaret du Maine-Simpson
Miksebeekstraat 104 2930 Brasschaat
11 May 2022

4. Auditor's report by Henk Hoogstraten, Auditor

To the Chairman, Committee Members and members of the Association of National Trust members in Belgium

The AGM 2021 decided that the function of auditor for the year 2021 should be performed by Henk Hoogstraten.

It is in this capacity that I audited the accounts of the Association of National Trust Members in Belgium for the year 2021.

After some fine-tuning with the Treasurer, Margaret du Maine, the Balance Sheet and the Income & Expenditure sheet 2021 mentioned the following figures:

Balance sheet 31-12-2021

Assets		€ 21.111,88
Debts	€ 2.560,00	
Retained results	€ 18.551,88	
Liabilities	<hr/>	€ 21.111,88

Income & Expenditure sheet 31-12-2021

Income	€ 4.690,76	
Costs	€ 4.006,64	
Result 2021	<hr/>	€ 684,12

To have, at a glance, more information about the figures mentioned in the Balance Sheet and in the Income & Expenditure Account 2021, I made several sheets which gave me further clarification.

While doing so, Margaret proved herself to be a big help. All my questions were answered quickly and in detail.

The accounts were very well kept and the supporting documents were found to be in order.

Members

Total members 31-12-2021	124
Total members 31-12-2020	119

One member has underpaid the membership fee by € 5,- and another has overpaid the membership fee by € 5,-. Three members paid twice. After consultation with Margaret, it was decided to book the overpayment as a donation.

UK-Trip in 2022

Subscribers for the trip to Northern Ireland: 28.

Lack of insurance

The NTAB is not insured against the consequences of cancellation of planned events. This poses primarily a risk for the UK-events. My advice is, to inform the participants clearly that the NTAB is not insured against the consequences of its decision to cancel a trip.

Estimated result UK-Trip 2022 (adjusted 16-05-22)

Received		€ 36.070,00
<i>Estimated costs</i>		
Tour guide	€ 1752,00	
Touring Car	€ 4.351,00	
Hotel & Flight (TUI)	€ 26.626,00	
Local expenses	€ 1.988,00	
		<u>- € 34.717,00</u>
Estimated result		€ 1.353,00

NOTE:

This adjustment includes the increase of local touring car costs, due to high fuel prices!

Remarks auditor

An expected negative result would incur provision costs that affect the 2021 result.

That is fortunately not the case here: the update of the estimated result does not affect the balance and result figures for 2021.

It is important to check every year whether a negative "event result" is expected in the next year, for which costs have already to be incurred in the current year.

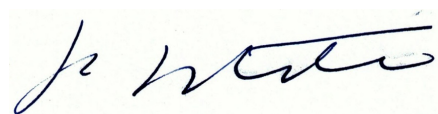
Donation National Trust UK

There is in my opinion no problem to give a donation to the National Trust UK. As far as I am concerned, the retained results are much to high !

Consequently, I consider that the accompanying Income & Expenditure Account and the Balance Sheet as on 31 December 2021, fairly represent the financial position of the Association on that date.

I will with pleasure answer any questions.

Henk Hoogstraten



Auditor NTAB
Poppel, 10 May 2022

The AGM thanked Henk for his report.

5. Election of the Committee members and the Officers until the next AGM

According to our constitution, the Committee consists of 4 officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and not less than 5 other members, elected at the AGM among Associated members.

All Committee members agreed to remain in their functions. Margaret du Maine-Simpson requested to be discharged of her mandate as Treasurer, while willing to continue to sit on the committee.

Officers

Chairman	Mr. Jan Grauls	Kraainem
Vice-Chairperson	Mrs. Carole Ducastel	Overijse
Secretary	Mr. Leo Nollet	Gent
Treasurer	Mrs. Margaret du Maine-Simpson <i>(until the end of this year)</i>	Brasschaat

Committee members

Programme coordinator	Mr. André Ceulemans	St-Genesius-Rode
Webmaster/Newsletter/ UK trip organisor (2022)	Mr. Johan Vanbrabant	Waarschoot
Programme committee	Mrs. Heather Charlton	Brussels
	Mr. Emile Debacker	Kampenhout
	Mr. Ludo Somers	Merksem
	Mr. Roland Walckiers	Sint-Niklaas

Tim Middleton, NTAB member for many years, was a candidate to join the committee.

As mentioned before, and as a result of Margaret's resignation as Treasurer, we needed to elect a new Treasurer and Membership Secretary to serve on the Committee. The chairman appealed for volunteers to take over from Margaret, but had to note with regret that there were no candidates within the group of AGM participants.

The AGM unanimously elected the members mentioned above for the duration of one year. As a result the chairman formally welcomed Tim as an additional Committee member.

6. Appointment of an auditor until the next AGM

The AGM unanimously elected Mr. Henk Hoogstraten as our external (i.e. independent of the Committee) auditor.

7. Approval of the annual subscriptions for members and non-members

The Committee decided that the annual subscriptions will remain unchanged, as defined at the previous AGM.

Members :

- Annual fee of 25 € for the first family member, and
- 20€ for any subsequent member at the same address

Non-members :

- Annual fee of 35 € for the first family member, and
- 25€ for any subsequent member at the same address

8. Approval of the Committee's recommendation for a donation to the National Trust in Britain

The AGM approved the donations of each 1250,00 euros to each of Greenway, Devon, and East Pool Mine, Cornwall.

Greenway is Agatha Christie's home, the author of the famous Hercule Poirot detective stories.

East Pool Mine started in the early 1700s, first produced quantities of copper and tin, and was one of the few mines to survive the Cornish mining depression in the late 19th century. After a shaft was sunk in the 1920s, its main product became tungsten which was much in demand in the Second World War for use of weapons.

Our association had planned to visit both NT properties and Carole got enormous help in setting up our planned visits both there and other properties. As members will remember, our UK 2021 UK trip had to be cancelled because of the covid pandemic.

9. Any other business

During the proceedings the chairman raised the question what could be done to generate more interest for attending our AGM meetings. In this respect different opinions were voiced and suggestions made. The chairman thanked the participants for their ideas and promised to take this issue up within the Committee.