

THE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY OF CHESHIRE

1999 Constitution as amended 20 October 2001

1. Name

The name of the Society shall be THE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY OF CHESHIRE.

2. Objects

The objects of the Society shall be to advance the education of the public in the study of Family History in all its many aspects.

3. Activities

In furtherance of the above object but not further or otherwise the Society shall have the following powers:

- (A) To arrange and hold meetings, talks, lectures, conferences, demonstrations, exhibitions and conducted tours to places of historical interest.
- (B) To form active groups in various parts of the former County Palatinate of Chester and elsewhere, including the Internet.
- (C) To provide services to members, including (but not limited to):
 - (1) A Members' Interest Index and service
 - (2) A regular magazine and/or newsletter;
 - (3) The recording of monumental inscriptions, copying and indexing of parish registers and other records;
 - (4) A Library and Research Centre;
 - (5) A presence on the Internet.
- (D) To publish appropriate material.
- (E) To collaborate with similar organisations and with bodies having the custody of records.
- (F) To carry out any other charitable activity which the Committee hereinafter referred to consider desirable and relevant to the above objects.

4. Membership

- (A) Membership shall be open to any person, library or other body interested in furthering the objects of the Society, upon payment of the appropriate subscription.
- (B) Every person or body admitted to membership shall be enrolled on a register of members to be kept by the Registrar/Membership Secretary who shall issue the Society's formal acknowledgement for all payments.
- (C) The Committee may for good and sufficient reason suspend or recommend the termination of membership of any member, a resolution to that effect having been passed by at least two-thirds of members of the committee present and voting. That suspension to become termination or to be set aside by the membership of the next General Meeting of the Society. Provided that such member will have the right to representation before the Committee and at the General Meeting, and be given not less than fourteen days' prior notice in writing of the resolution to be discussed.

5. Subscriptions

- (A) The subscription rates shall be regularly surveyed, and the amount to be charged shall be recommended from time to time by the Committee to the Society in General Meeting. The subscription rates shall be decided by the members in General Meeting on a simple majority of those present and voting.
- (B) The subscription is payable in advance.
- (C) Subscriptions not renewed within two months of the due date may be assumed to have lapsed, but may be renewed upon payment of the amount due.

6. Officers, Trustees and Committee

- (A) The Society shall be managed by an Executive Committee (herein referred to as “the Committee”) which shall consist of the following members:
 - (1) The Officers of the Society (namely, the Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer);
 - (2) Other officials elected at an Annual General Meeting or appointed by the Committee;
 - (3) The Group Leaders from each Group of the Society.
- (B) The Trustees of the Society shall be the members of the Committee.
- (C) The Committee shall meet as often as may be necessary, but not less than three times a year. A **quorum** shall consist either of nine persons, or of one-third of the total number of Trustees, whichever is less.
- (D) The Chairman of the meeting may vote as a member, and shall also have a casting vote.
- (E) The Officers of the Committee shall retire annually at the Annual General Meeting. The term of office of an Officer shall commence with the declaration of the result at the Annual General Meeting at which he or she is appointed. Society Officers will be eligible for re-election.
- (F) No Officer may serve on the Committee in the same capacity or office for more than five consecutive terms of office.
- (G) Any Committee member may nominate a Proxy to speak and vote on their behalf at meetings of the Committee.

7. Powers of the Committee

The Committee shall have power at its discretion:

- (A) To co-opt additional members to the Committee from time to time, or to fill any casual vacancy in any of the offices. Any persons so appointed shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting.
- (B) To appoint members as Non-Executive Officials of the Society. Such persons shall be entitled to attend and speak at meetings of the Committee but they shall not be eligible in their own right to vote at Committee meetings or to serve as Trustees of the Society.
- (C) To appoint bankers, to authorise signatories who shall be Trustees, and to arrange for cheques to be signed by any two of these signatories.
- (D) To appoint sub-committees or ‘ad hoc’ committees from time to time.
- (E) To fix dates upon which it will hold its meetings, and the date of the Annual General Meeting and other meetings of the Society.
- (F) To exercise such powers and do all such acts and things as may be exercised or done by the Society, subject to such regulations, directions and conditions as may be prescribed by the Society in General Meeting.
- (G) To make such regulations as it may deem necessary.
- (H) To establish Groups in accordance with Clause 3(B) of this Constitution.

8. Groups

- (A) A Group established in accordance with sub-clause 3(B) of this Constitution shall be subject to and shall comply with the regulations (“the Group Regulations”) formulated and laid down from time to time by the Committee.
- (B) A Group shall be deemed to have been established after its formation has been approved by the Committee and it has adopted the Group Regulations.
- (C) A Group established as aforesaid shall hold an Annual General Meeting in each calendar year.
- (D) Any member’s subscription collected or paid to a Group shall belong to and be the property of the Society. All monies and assets held or used by a Group shall belong to the Society except any monies and assets lent to a Group by a member or a third party.
- (E) A member of the Society may if he or she wishes choose to be attached to one Group of the Society and shall as long as he or she do determines be attached to the Group and thereby be subject to the Group Regulations.

- (F) A Group may be wound up by those members of the Society attached to it in accordance with the Group Regulations. In addition the Committee may suspend a Group at any time for good and sufficient reason, a resolution to that effect having been passed by at least 90% of the members of the Committee present and voting, and thereupon such Group's activities shall be suspended and all its monies and assets held or used by it shall be frozen until a resolution passed by three-quarters of the Society's members present and voting at the next Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for the purpose decides whether to wind up the Group or not. The Group Regulations shall govern the effect of suspension of a Group and the manner of winding up the Group. For the avoidance of doubt a member of a Group which is suspended shall continue to be a member of the Society entitled to those rights of membership to which all members of the Society are entitled.

9. Annual General Meeting

An Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held within five months of the end of its financial year for the following purposes:

- (A) To receive a report from the Committee and a statement of Accounts from the Hon. Treasurer for the preceding financial year, together with the report of the Independent Examiner or Auditor, and reports from each of the Groups of the Society.
- (B) To elect the Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and other Society officials for the ensuing year.
- (C) To appoint an Independent Examiner or Auditor.
- (D) To decide by simple majority upon any resolution which may be duly submitted to the meeting for consideration. No resolution, other than those relating to the adoption of reports and accounts, shall be moved at the Annual General Meeting unless a notice in writing, signed by the member who proposes to move it and stating its terms, has been received by the Hon. Secretary at least forty-two days before the date appointed for the holding of such Annual General Meeting.
- (E) The Chairman of the meeting shall, at his or her discretion, and with the consent of a majority of the members present and voting, have the power to admit resolutions of which notice has not been given, if such resolution shall not involve any alterations of the Constitution. Such resolution shall be decided upon by a simple majority of members present and voting.
- (F) At least twenty-eight days before the Annual General Meeting a detailed notice of such meeting shall be sent, by circular or otherwise, to every member of the Society at his/her last known address.

10. Extraordinary General Meetings

- (A) An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society shall be called by the Secretary at the request of the Committee or on the requisition of at least fifty members of the Society.
- (B) At least seven days' notice shall be sent to every member prior to such meeting, and such notice shall specify the business to be transacted at such meeting.

11. Notices

Any notice may be served on any member of the Society either personally or by mail to their last recorded address or by other means. The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting, or the non-receipt of any such notice by any member shall not invalidate any resolution passed at any such meeting of the Society.

12. Finance

- (A) All money belonging to the Society shall be deposited with the Society's bankers, with the exception of up to £250 in the hands of a person or persons authorised by the Committee, and also funds in the hands of Groups formed and acting in accordance with the Constitution and Group Regulations.
- (B) The financial year of the Society shall be from the first day of July to the thirtieth day of June of the following year.
- (C) The Committee shall have the power, should the occasion arise, to invest monies of the Society in such manner as it shall decide, acting as permitted by Law. Such investments shall be made on the Society's behalf in the name of at least three members as Trustees, one of whom shall be the Hon. Treasurer of the Society.

13. Care of Society Property

No members shall remove any reference book, document or other property of the Society without having first obtained the sanction of the Librarian or other appointed custodian of such property. All articles borrowed on loan can only be borrowed at the discretion of the Librarian or other custodian, and an adequate record of the loan should be kept.

14. Affiliation

The Society may affiliate with any body (not formed for the purpose of profit) having objects similar to those of this Society.

15. Alteration of the Constitution

No alteration shall be made in the Constitution of the Society, except by resolution passed by simple majority of the members present and voting at the Annual General Meeting, or at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose, and no alteration or amendment shall be made to the Object Clause which would cause the Society to cease to be a Charity at law.

16. Dissolution

The Society shall be disbanded at any time by vote of three-quarters of its members who being entitled to vote do so at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for the express purpose of winding up the Society. All funds and other property held by the Society at the time of dissolution shall, after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities of the Society, be disposed of at the discretion of such meeting to some other charitable Institution or Institutions having objects and aims similar to those of this Society, with the approval of the Charity Commissioners of England and Wales.

17. Matters not Covered by the Constitution

The Committee shall have the power, at its discretion, to deal with all questions which may from time to time arise not covered by this Constitution.

Adopted by the Society at its AGM on 20 October 2001.

Brenda W. Smith, Chairman.