

EFHS Chair's report October 2024 to September 2025

Last year, I mentioned the need to recruit more members and this year the need is even greater. A number of our present members feel that they are now too old to take part and so our numbers are dwindling. Many thanks to those of you who have been so steadfast in maintaining their memberships.

To this end, we have held a couple of events in the hope of making membership more attractive to our present members. Angela Waterfall, our Research Manager, has organised a couple of Rambles which involves walks round certain areas where there were a lot of East families. The first of these was held before our last AGM but there has been another since, in Shoreditch in London where there were many furniture makers and 9000 East entries in the census records. These walks ended with a pub lunch. I would love to have attended but work did not permit, so I can only imagine what a good time they had.

I organised an online talk given by Jessica Feinstein, who is the speaker at this year's AGM. She is professional and bursting with the sort of information that we need. The online talk was called 'Breaking the Barriers' and was for those who had reached a dead end with their own research.

The attendance at these events was unfortunately not what we had hoped. The committee, however, are very loyal and some of them attend everything! We have discussed the problem in our meetings, and you will find the results in the proposal letter that has been sent to you with Points East. We will be discussing it further at this AGM.

On the more general administrative side, we have very much missed having a secretary, although Angela Waterfall agreed to take on the membership part of the secretarial role last year. We made a useful discovery that it is possible for those living overseas to pay their subscriptions by Paypal, thus opening the doors to any Easts living abroad, as there is no commission to pay.

We are members of the Federation of Family History Societies and as such, we are properly insured for our events. This Federation produces regular bulletins that anyone can receive just by asking them. They have many meetings which I am personally too busy to attend but if anyone would like to do so, please let me know.

Our website continues to flourish under the leadership of Adam and Paul Gostelow and I do hope that some of you spend some time reading it. If you have lost the password, please do ask Amanda for a reminder.

Several members of the committee have said that they wish to stand down at this AGM, including myself, and this will lead to an inability to have meetings, since we won't have a quorum. If anyone should feel alarmed by this, we can reverse the situation, but other people will have to volunteer for the committee for us to continue.

Many of the above points will be covered by the existing members of the committee in their reports and I would like to thank them all for their tireless hard work, especially Amanda for producing Points East so regularly when there has been only one contribution from members outside of the committee this year.

The time has come for change and this will be decided at this AGM.