

The Seale-Haynians club – Life Membership.

Seale-Haynians who joined the club (formerly the Old Seale-Haynians) will recall that life membership included an annual copy of *The Seale-Haynian* Magazine.

We often receive vexed enquiries understandably, from older Seale-Haynians asking why this no longer prevails. The short answer is from around 1989 the club could no longer afford it.

Until 1973 life membership of the Club was mandatory. When coming down the membership fee was automatically deducted from one's refunded "caution money", which we deposited when we came up. There were occasional mutterings over the years that this was dictatorial but the system worked well and ensured an adequate club income.

When the new Principal arrived in 1972 he decided that this mandatory system was improper and he insisted that membership become a voluntary opt-in arrangement. Immediately, annual new membership dropped to around 2% of leavers with a consequent much reduced income. This could not continue so in the late 70's the committee successfully lobbied the Student Union President Virginia Rudge and her executive committee to switch to an opt-out system. Membership was still voluntary.

Annual new membership immediately jumped to around 90% and this system worked well until College merged with Plymouth Polytechnic in the late 80's. Then P.P. Accounts Department made the asinine claim that their computer systems could not cope with deducting membership from caution money just for Seale-Hayne, so they forced us back to an opt-in system. Immediately, new annual membership dropped to 15-20 only. With such a drop in annual income we again found ourselves funding 3000 annual magazines plus postage, so something had to be done. The refusal of Plymouth Polytechnic as it was then was nothing to do with their accounts system being unable to cope they simply could not be bothered. It was an early example of PP (later the University of Plymouth) demonstrating scant interest in Seale-Hayne College.

Accordingly, it became necessary to fund *The Seale-Haynian* magazine by annual Standing Order Mandate (currently, £6.00), to be renewed every ten years. The new system was well publicised in the magazine and by several newsletters when the system changed in 1989. However, it is possible that many Seale-Haynians were unaware of this change because they had moved home and thus became "lost souls". Unfortunately many members do not inform us of a change of address and every year we receive a number of "moved away" magazine returns.

All Seale-Haynians remain life members but the magazine is funded separately. Over the years we have circulated newsletters to the entire membership, the latest was sent just before Christmas 2009; but as with the magazine we receive many "gone away" returns.

Raymond Bartlett.

P.S. I recall suggesting at the AGM around '89 that Plymouth Polytechnic Accounts Dept get rid of their old fashioned computers and replace them with a first class modern, hand written card index system; they would find no trouble in marking cards for S-H students thus, "deduct £x from caution money refund" The irony however was lost on P.P. RB