

**Meeting with the US Branch
to discuss the increase in the Society's subscriptions
19 November 2023, 17:00 GMT**

Summary Notes

Attendees:

Matt Lewis	(ML)	Society Chair
John Whiting	(JW)	Society Treasurer
Julia Langham	(JL)	Society Membership Officer
Susan Troxall	(ST)	American Branch Chair
Wayne Ingalls	(WI)	American Branch Membership Officer

Meeting Summary

- The meeting was convened in the light of the Society's change to its subscriptions levels and structure, as approved at the recent AGM, especially the phasing out of the Senior rate. The US Branch has historically paid a per capita amount to the main Society (ie with no differentiation between Senior, Adult, or Junior rates and no 'discount' for Family membership); latterly that amount has been tied to the Senior subscription level. In addition, the US Branch pays the Overseas Mailing Supplement (OMS), again on a per capita basis.
- The mechanics are that the US Branch advises JW in November the numbers of members on its books; JW raises an invoice to send to the US Branch in December so they can account for the charge (and pay it!) before the end of the year.
- ML recapped on some of the reasons for the increases: cost increases, the deficit we have been running on publications, the fact that a large majority of members paid the Senior rate etc. We had researched other organisations and were clear that our rates are low compared to organisations such as Battlefields Trust. Member feedback was very strongly that they wanted the quality of publications to be maintained – and that by implication they were prepared to pay for them.
- ST & WI endorsed all this, mentioning the Royal Oak Society as a comparator.
- ML & JW said that the Adult rate was now fixed at £35 for October 2024; the issue was how quickly the Senior rate would catch this up – the current intention is to increase the Senior rate by £2 or £3 a year from 2024. It seems reasonable to have the US member rate increase at this rate, so keeping it in line with the Senior rate.
- One issue for the US Branch to think about is whether they want to avail themselves of the Family rate. WI said that at present their member records didn't identify properly those who could benefit. They currently have 451 households on their membership list: 424 individual memberships and 27 family memberships (with a total of 34 (additional) family members, some family memberships having more than one additional family member).
- ST felt the way of increasing the US Branch subs was fair and all agreed that it was hard to justify the US Branch getting a discount that was not available to e.g. the New Zealand Branch. However, all are mindful of the impact on US Branch charges to members.

- ST raised the question of the OMS. ML confirmed that the plan was that this would remain at £15 until at least we had been able to offer electronic copies of the publications, which would give members the possibility of opting out of hard copy publications and avoiding the OMS.
- ST also asked about bulk mailing publications to the US Branch. This used to be done but stopped c3 years ago due to a combination of bulk postal charges increasing significantly and the US Branch not wanting to have to distribute the publications. JL felt that it was still more economical to do individual mailings but will discuss the issue with First Mailing.
- We discussed the timing of the charge to the US Branch; the request from ST & WI was to continue with the current arrangement which the Society is happy to do. JW will set the ball rolling shortly.
- The meeting closed at 17:45

John Whiting