



Ashford Borough Museum Society



President: George Jessel DL

The Church Yard, Ashford, Kent TN23 1QG

Annual General Meeting

3pm, Wednesday 11th August 2021,
Parish Rooms, Church Yard, Ashford

20 Members attended.

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman, Richard Yeates thanked everyone for coming – to make it a real meeting, with real people in a real room. Members and guest were all very welcome. For the museum it had been a very challenging 18 months, but also an interesting 18 months; the start of the next chapter. The Chairman said his main message was a huge thank you to volunteers; Stewards, Committee, Officers and Trustees everyone has shown fantastic commitment. A warm welcome to this AGM.

2. Apologies for Absence

Ian and Lynne Sharp were in Scotland and unable to attend; Mary Wiggins unable to attend due to shielding from Covid. Others had also sent apologies as they were also shielding at home.

3. Minutes of Previous meeting (2019 AGM).

The Chairman said it that although it was embarrassing that we don't have the minutes of the previous 2019 AGM (due to Covid there was not one in 2020) he hoped everyone would accept and welcome this meeting as a convivial affair. He was however able to reassure everyone present that the Annual Accounts had been signed off and submitted. It was noted that this meeting, on August 11th, was the first date it had been possible to book a suitable room and hold a meeting following the partial relaxation of covid rules. In normal times the AGM would earlier in the year.

4. Matters Arising

The Chairman advised that there were no matters arising as the minutes do not exist.

5. Resignation of Secretary

The Chairman announced that it was a great sadness that Mary Wiggins had resigned as The Hon Sec of the Museum. Over very many years Mary has contributed a vast amount, as the Secretary, Minutes secretary for the Committee, and the person with contacts to be able to organise anything and everything. The 30th Anniversary party being just one of many. Mary leaves a big hole to fill.

The Chairman invited everyone to offer their inspiration and ideas. The role includes monitoring visitor numbers, writing minutes and the newsletter, promote and manage membership, arrange meetings.

While some of these roles might be able to be separated the core functions were Committee Minutes, AGM and timely circulation of agendas and papers.

6. Election of Officers

Hon. Curator: The Chairman was delighted to advise the meeting that Ian had agreed to continue in the role of Interim Curator which he had kindly taken on after his Retirement at the end of August 2020.

Proposed Alan Terry; Seconded Karen Saunders;

Hon Treasurer: Bob Shrubbs said he was willing to continue as Treasurer

Proposed Ann Thomas, Seconded Brian Strange

Hon Secretary: nominations were invited. As there were none the role remains vacant for now.



Chairman Trustee Christine Drury invited Richard Yeates to continue as Chairman, which he was willing to do. Proposed Christine Drury, Seconded Mike Boulding.

Members were invited by a show of hands to vote for the three nominations. Elected unanimously.

7. Appointments to the Management Committee

The Chairman reminded the meeting that the constitution provided for the Management Committee to be the 4 officers (Chairman, Curator, Treasurer and Secretary) and 6 other members. The Constitution also provided for 5 trustees who could attend management meetings.

Current other members were willing to stand for re-election except Trevor Barton, who was standing down this year. Janet Welch and Ann Thomas were proposed by Alan Terry, Seconded by Terry Flood, and elected unanimously.

8. To receive the Treasurer's Report.

The Treasurer presented his Report for 2019 and 2020 which is attached. Summary accounts have been distributed previously.

The Chairman noted that the Report showed a good result. As a charity we have a duty to spend our funds wisely. The chairman invited the meeting to approve the Accounts for 2019 and 2020. Proposed by Janet Welch. Seconded by Brian Strange. Accounts for 2019 and 2020 were approved unanimously.

9. Curators Report

The Chairman noted that in the absence of the Interim Curator, who was unable to attend the meeting due to a diary clash, there was no Curator's report.

10 Trustees Report

Peter Taylor had retired after long service to the Museum as a Steward and as a Trustee. This AGM was an opportunity to record sincere thanks to him. Current Trustees are Roger Pitt, Karen Saunders, Mike Boulding and Christine Drury. This means there is currently a vacancy.

The two strategic projects trustees are working on currently are:

1) Developing our organisation as a museum. This is focussed on the Curatorial role but is wider than that because one of the reasons we have found it very difficult to find a successor for Ian is because the role is wider than people are now willing to take on, and it needs a rethink. Jo Boardman and Fran Stovold are our consultants undertaking this wider Curatorial Review, and visiting us today – their first face to face meeting with us; many of you have already completed their Volunteer Survey

2) Considering how to expand the museum physically by relocating because we are literally bursting at the seams: it is wonderful to be an Aladdin's cave of Ashford's stories, less wonderful to be sardines in a can with no space to do the work. Ashford Borough Council have a cultural vision for the town centre which could be a relocation possibility. The current stage of these ideas are the architects discussion drawings – (shared at the meeting) - of an Ashford Centre for Crafts and Culture adapting the Odeon cinema frontage on the lower high street to be an entrance into a modern area behind including museum space. Practical questions of cost sharing, timing, space and fit-out and paid staff were raised in discussion. Being less hidden away could help recruit new people.

11. Any Other Business

The Treasurer advised the AGM that a Grant bid for a heritage lottery project funding had been submitted. This would make running Wheel of Time more practical as an independent organisation. and repeatable outside Kent.

12 Closing remarks

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 4pm



APPENDIX: Treasurers Report: Summaries of the accounts for 2019 and 2020 have been distributed. These do not have all of the detail of the full statement but includes the main information with some extra data regarding **Donation Box** income and Subscription income. A few copies of the full statement are available for any members who wish to inspect it.

2019: The General Fund revenue for 2019, i.e. that from

- membership subscriptions,
- general donations to the donations boxes,
- donations from other organisations (mainly as a result of talks given by the Ian and Mike) and
- sales of books, postcards, DVDs etc.

amounted to £ 2,589.

General fund costs, including

- utilities,
- insurance,
- maintenance and
- creation and refurbishment of displays

were £ 3,254.

General fund costs exceeded general fund revenue by £ 664.

Once again there was a substantial fall in donations from individuals and other organisations. Most of the sums in this column results from outreach undertaken by Ian and Mike.

Subscription income during the calendar year rose by £240. This is due to a larger number of members paying their 2021 subscription early.

The Trustees decided to transfer the balance of the designated Railway Room Fund into the General Fund.

This resulted in a net increase of £ 968 giving a balance of £ 5136.

We continue to lead the Wheels of Time scheme and handle the funds in respect of this. Costs have again been met mainly by external funding.

2020: As expected, the Covid epidemic lead to General Fund income in 2020 dropping substantially; to £ 981. Although, due to reduced opening the expenditure also dropped, to £ 1999, this would have given a deficit of £ 1018. However, thanks to the tireless efforts of officers at Ashford Borough Council, we received £ 10,000 in Government Coronavirus Grants. £ 2,500 of this was put into the General Fund to give a balance of £ 6,619, close to our target reserve of two typical years' expenditure, £ 1,266 was spent preparing the Museum to open during the pandemic and purchase a licence for Zoom meetings, the remainder was used to create a Designated (Coronavirus) Fund. In addition to the £ 10,000 received last year we have received £ 53,000 in Coronavirus Grants this year. This has been added to the Designated Fund. We have drawn from the fund to renew the Zoom Licence, purchase thermo-hygrometers to monitor the environmental conditions in the Museum, a new ladder and the Touch-screen Unit, totalling to £ 7,767, leaving £51,568 in the C19 Fund.

During 2019 we also received a grant of £ 6,000, from The Frank Brake Charitable Trust Fund, to undertake the review of Curatorial Roles within the Museum. This is set aside as a Restricted Fund. We continue to be Lead Member & hold the Funds for the Wheels of Time network. This has 48 members.

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