

**BUDLEIGH SALTERTON ARTS CENTRE AND MUSEUM (FAIRLYNCH)  
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN PETER HALL ON  
THURSDAY 2 MAY 2019 AT 3PM**

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Di Bagshawe, Rosemary Bradshaw, Ann Butler, Lord and Lady Clinton, Elizabeth Cummings, Ann Hack, Bernard Hadley, Bernadette Hughes, Eileen Milne, Daphne Rowe, Jacqui Ruhlig, Maureen and Roger Sherriff, Ronald and Nicky Smith, Chris Searle, Nick and Gill Speare, Jo Talbot-Bowen, Peter and Carole Walker, Ralph Howard-Williams, and Tom Wright

2. Welcome

The Chairman expressed thanks for their attendance to the 37 members and two non-member helpers who were present.

3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 5 April 2018 and the Special General Meeting held 13 September 2018

Acceptance of the Minutes with no amendments was proposed by Roger Kingwill, seconded by Susannah Ashworth. All voted in favour.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Election of Trustees

Trevor Waddington, Chris Fry and Roz Hickman were willing to stand for a further year.

Election of new Trustees:

David Brittain – Treasurer. Proposed: Michael Downes. Seconded: Trevor Waddington.

Bernard Hadley - Proposed: Chris Fry. Seconded: Michael Downes.

Ian Lacey – Education. Proposed: Trevor Waddington. Seconded: David Brittain.

Susan Lacey - Minutes and Membership Secretary. Proposed: Trevor Waddington.

Seconded: Chris Fry.

The acceptance of new and standing Trustees was proposed by Roger Lendon, seconded by Iris Ansell. All voted in favour.

6. Chairman's Report

Firstly I must thank my fellow Trustees for their continued support during my fourth year as Chairman.

There have been several departmental changes in the last year: Betty Hebditch has relocated to Gloucestershire and Carol Griffiths is now in charge of the Linhay and the costume collection. Trustee Martyn Brown, our former museum professional, has stood down for family reasons but I'm hopeful that he may return in the future. Sue Morgan has handed over the bears, toys and dolls collection to Christine Hadley enabling her to concentrate on the lace collection.

In accordance with our Constitution, Michael Downes steps down as a Trustee after 6 very full and productive years. His duties included minutes secretary, education guru, publicity manager and editor of The Primrose. Michael's education role will be undertaken by Ian Lacey, his secretarial duties by Susan Lacey, and publicity by Carol Giles. However, it's not goodbye to Michael as he will continue to edit and publish The Primrose and, on suitable occasions, will appear as his alter ego, Sir Walter Raleigh! Mo Sherriff steps down as Membership Secretary, being replaced by Susan Lacey, and Chris Searle steps down after 3 years as Treasurer, being replaced by David Brittain. Thank you Michael, Mo and Chris for your valuable work.

From people to exhibitions:

Last year's main exhibition from May through October was of course Raleigh 400, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity but also a challenge. It would not have been possible without the many grants and donations from private individuals and corporate sponsors, including the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The exhibition required an extra steward and an invigilator, kindly provided by the Budleigh Salterton Art club. Visitor numbers were in excess of 7,000 - a 40% increase on normal. The education team - Michael Downes as Sir Walter and Lizzie Mee, an outreach specialist - managed to exceed the HLF's target of reaching over 2,000 local schoolchildren. A superb achievement all round and a lasting memory for those involved.

This year's main exhibitions are 'The Changing Face of The High Street' downstairs, 'Devon's New World Explorers' upstairs. The High Street exhibition was the result of extensive research by Roz Hickman, ably assisted by Di Waddington. The icing on the cake for this exhibition has been the display of watercolour paintings of the High Street by the late Kenneth Walker. Special thanks to Audrey Walker and family and also Alan Tilbury for making this possible.

The New World Explorers exhibition was inspired by the forthcoming Mayflower 400 celebrations next year. We wanted to make the point that Devon men such as Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Humphrey Gilbert established English colonies in North America decades before the Pilgrim Fathers set sail. Thanks to Margaret and Mike Wilson for their knowledge and expertise in designing the exhibition and to Dartmouth museum for loaning the model of Drake's ship the Golden Hinde.

Now to a recent acquisition for our collection, seen here on display. It's a hitherto unknown Old Master portrait of Sir Walter Raleigh believed to date from the 17th Century. The provenance is still under investigation but a label on the back of the painting links it to William Drake Gould of Lew Trenchard Manor near Okehampton, who died in 1766.

Finally, my thanks to the Friends of Fairlynch and the many volunteers; Stewards, Gardeners etc. My special thanks to Martin Smith, our webmaster and IT guru who works hard behind the scenes. Also to Rob and Sylvia Merkel who do so much for the day-to-day upkeep of the building and the running of the museum. Without you all Fairlynch would not be the success that it is.

## 7. Membership Secretary's Report

For the 2018/19 membership year, ending on 31 January 2019, there were 394 subscription members, 3 honorary members, 13 corporate members, as well as 12 non-members who volunteer their time to the Museum. We welcomed 19 new members who joined during the year, and regrettably lost 13 members, due to resignation or death.

Of the 394 registered subscribed members, around 45 individual or household members do not appear to have paid their subscriptions in 2018 or indeed in 2019. This is mainly from members who don't pay by Standing Order, and I am in the process of contacting everyone concerned. Going forward, I plan to use the Primrose to remind members when subscriptions are due. Some members pay their standing orders on the anniversary of their date of joining, rather than the start of the Membership year, and I will be reaching out to them in the coming months to try to persuade them to change those payments. This will make it much easier for us to claim Gift Aid from HMRC promptly.

In July 2017, we notified members that the subscription rates were being raised and that we were changing bank accounts. We asked members who pay by Standing Order to change their payments from NatWest to Lloyds. We are very grateful to everyone who has done so but there is a significant number still paying through the NatWest account. Again, we'll be in touch with those members in the coming weeks to try to tidy that up, as well as those who are still paying the old subscription rates.

We are most grateful to those members who pay more than the minimum subscriptions of £15 per individual and £20 per household.

I would welcome any comments or suggestions on how we can better serve our Members in the future. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

## 8. Treasurer's Report

I present this year's Treasurer's Report on behalf of the retiring treasurer who unfortunately can't be with us this afternoon.

The audited accounts, which have been approved by Trustees, show that in the financial year 2018/19 expenditure exceeded income by £4025. This was, nevertheless, an improvement of nearly £800 on the previous year.

The Raleigh 400 Exhibition gave a financial boost to the museum funds with the income of £26146 exceeding the expenses of £20805.

However, regular income was down by £4577, mainly attributable to lower donations (due to and offset by the charge levied for admission to the Raleigh 400 exhibition). Unfortunately, in the year the investment growth showed a negative £566 compared with a positive in 2017/18 of £2441. Operating cost reduced by just over £3200 and offset the downturn in investment growth.

The Museum's Trustees have a duty to ensure that the finances are sound and well managed, so in 2019/20 we will be working to further reducing the deficit with the objective of breaking even in 2020/21. To help achieve this several initiatives will be implemented which include:

- Tight control of all expenditure
- Better investment of the Museum's assets
- Recruitment of more 'Friends of Fairlynch'
- Re-introduction of admission charges in 2020/2021, if approved by the AGM.

In response to a question from Roger Lendon regarding a grant from Budleigh Salterton Town Council, the Chairman confirmed that a grant of £1000 had been made in 2018. For 2019 a grant of £400 had been made.

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Roger Kingwill, seconded by Neville Lister. All voted in favour.

The Chairman thanked Brian Leveridge for the hard work he had devoted to the Museum's accounts, and for his willingness to be the Independent Examiner of the 2019/20 accounts. Approval was proposed by Chris Fry, seconded by Sylvia Merkel. All voted in favour.

#### 9. Proposal to introduce a £3 entry fee for adults (children and Friends of Fairlynch free) in 2020.

Among the contributions in a discussion on the above was Phil Ashworth's suggestion that the £3 entry fee should be presented as per person, per year. He believed that this would create goodwill for little commercial loss. Another suggestion from a FoF was that £3 could cover one visit, with £5 for annual membership, on lines similar to Bicton Gardens entrance scheme. Susan Lacey pointed out that, if we were to offer such membership, we would need to ensure that there were appropriate benefits for the subscription members. The response was that receiving the Primrose was worth the current membership subscription. Jenny Tilbury felt that £2.50 would be the right figure, so that a couple would pay £5. Peter Greenaway felt that £3 was an awkward figure, and in any case believed strongly in free admission for museums. The proposal was put forward for a vote; proposed by Simon Griffiths, seconded by Maureen Lister. A majority voted in favour, with five against.

#### 10. Any Other Business

There being no other business the meeting closed at 3.50 pm. Tea and cakes were served. The proposed illustrated talk 'Tudor Portraits' by art expert Maggie Giraud did not take place because of technical problems with equipment.

***DATE AND TIME FOR THE 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE CONFIRMED IN DUE COURSE***