

PITSTONE & IVINGHOE MUSEUM SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 23rd NOVEMBER 2017 AT PITSTONE GREEN MUSEUM AT 19.30

1. Apologies were received from:-

Sandra Barnard, Norman Groom, Paul Chapman, Allen Fairbrother, Sue and Jeff Denty, Lesley and Tim Newing, John Barber, Christine Smith and Brian Davis

2. Those Present:-

Chairman - John Childs

Treasurer – John Youngs

Secretary – Dennis Trebble

Programme and Publicity– Pete Farrar

Other Committee members - S Lipscomb, Nigel Thompson

Plus 38 additional members of PIMS

2. Minutes of the AGM (24th November 2016)

It was proposed by Lesley Herriot and seconded by John Powell that the minutes were a true record of the meeting and this was carried unanimously and the minutes were signed.

3. Matters arising

There were none.

4. Chairman's Report – delivered by John Childs

This has been a record year for the museum, particularly regarding monies received via catering and entrance fees on Open Days. The Easter Open Day was particularly successful with over 500 people visiting; an all time record. One sadness is the resignation of Norman Groom as Museum Manager due to ill health. The meeting recorded its thanks and wished him a speedy recovery.

We owe a debt of gratitude to all the volunteers who visit the museum regularly. They fall into four main groups, firstly the engineers who keep all the machinery in good order, secondly the skilled carpenters, thirdly those who are involved with the administration of our organisation, working on the newsletter, the archives and secretarial work and finally those who maintain and develop the displays around the museum.

Our successful accreditation was announced and the chairman explained the significance of this. Much of the thanks for the success should go to Dennis Trebble who did a fantastic job guiding and encouraging us all.

As the museum becomes even more of an attraction on Open Days, we will need many more volunteers so that all areas can be manned effectively.

5. Treasurer's Report and approval of accounts for the year ending 31.03. 16 – John Youngs

The Treasurer John Youngs reminded the meeting that a copy of PIMS Financial Results for the year ended 31st March 2017 had been distributed with the Autumn Newsletter. Those results covered the Open Day income for 2016. Total income for the year was £2.5k less than the previous year. Although this seems disappointing, the previous year was the highest ever to that time. As the Chairman has already mentioned income for the current year has broken all records at £30k. Expenditure on Projects was similar to the previous year, possibly held back by lack of volunteer time. Overhead expenditure was as expected except repairs to buildings and depreciation, the latter due to purchase of additional site equipment.

The Surplus for the year was £6.5k which increased our Balance Sheet value to £86k with Cash reserves of £73k. Interest rates continue to be very low so there is little incentive to actively manage Cash.

The Treasurer asked that the meeting accept and approve the Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2017, this was proposed by Bill Barnard, seconded by Rob Barber and agreed unanimously.

6. To receive the following Reports: -

PIMS

AGM 23 November 2017

- **Museum Report**

We were reminded that each newsletter contained a detailed Museum Report. The ongoing project is the Elliott Shop which is being reconstructed in the area that was the tractor shed.

- **Programme Report – Pete Farrar**

2017 was a good year for our PIMS talks although it's still disappointing to see the number of people who almost never come. There is a full calendar for next year except just one date which is still under negotiation. Although the talks start at 8 pm videos are shown from about 7.15pm to extend the interest of the members. Reminders are sent to most of the people who are on our email lists using blind copies to ensure security of personal details.

- **Publicity Report – Pete Farrar**

The figures for attendance at Open Days in 2017 show that we must be doing something right, although the weather was obviously very kind to us this year. Publicity has been spread as broadly as possible including many mentions on local radio, including BBC3CR several times, and a spot on St. Albans Verulam Radio. Less was done with schools, but a leaflet drop in Aylesbury was successful. There is now have a good supply of large and small road signs which are generally in place on the Tuesday before each Open Day. There is also concentrated exposure at Ashridge Visitors Centre on each open day. The mystery of the disappearing road signs has been solved amicably. Next year's leaflets will be similar to this years with a picture of Nigel's tractor, some children and RF's dog Barney who is always popular in the shop. Next year the hope is to do more in the Luton and Dunstable areas and also in Aylesbury.

Mel Davis added that around 275 people refer to our Facebook page regularly so that has been a successful way of reaching new people.

- **Membership Report – Bill Barnard**

The Pitstone and Ivinghoe Museum Society has 164 members. This is an increase of four from last year. There were 11 members who did not renew their membership this year, but we picked up 19 new members, all at our Open Days. The membership list is used to post out the newsletters to members and also 11 other people or organisations, such as local newspapers and libraries. The new colour cover of the Newsletter was noted together with the plea that the editor would welcome articles from members over and above the small band of regular contributors.

7. To consider any motions brought forward by the membership

There were none

9. Election of officers and committee members

Officers of the Society - The Current Officers as listed below confirmed they were happy to continue.

CHAIRMAN - John Childs

VICE CHAIRMAN- Norman Groom

TREASURER - John Youngs

SECRETARY - Dennis Trebble

Executive Committee

Noted that Nigel Thompson resigned, he was thanked for his time on the EC.

The existing committee members listed below have expressed their willingness to continue.

Pete Farrar - plus will continue as Programme Secretary and Publicity Secretary

Sue Lipscomb - plus will continue as Minutes Secretary

Paul Chapman

During the year the following two members had been co-opted onto the Executive Committee and have confirmed their willingness to continue

Simon Heaton

Lesley Herriott - plus will take up the new post of Deputy Treasurer

Following an appeal to fill the two vacant EC places John Powell agreed to join the Committee.

It was proposed by Rob Barber and seconded by Ray Herriot that the above people should be voted in en bloc. This was unanimously agreed.

The Chairman reported that following the resignation of Norman Groom he was pleased to say that Pete Farrar had accepted the post of Museum Manager.

Posts currently not occupied by committee members

Sue Denty will continue as Archivist

Sandra Barnard as Newsletter Editor

Bill Barnard as Membership Secretary

Ronnie Farrar as Museum Shop Manger and helping with the role of Programme Secretary

Brenda Grace is standing down as Crafts Organiser and there may be less help now from Margaret Elliott who books the Dance Groups

This leaves a vacancy for Museum Deputy Manager

10. Appointment of Independent Accounts Examiner

It was proposed by Rob Barber and seconded by Bill Barnard that Tony Sargeant should be appointed to continue in this role and all were in favour.

11. Any other business

- Roy Smith raised the concerns during busy Open Days that visitors cannot move freely through the entrance area and into the rest of the museum and there is often a 'traffic jam' there. He thought that a different way of accessing the site should be considered so that there was a smoother movement of people. Maybe a better route would be past the Blacksmith's shop. He will give his proposal to the secretary to present at the next EC Meeting.
- There were discussions regarding the toilets and the fact that on some Open Days we need more. It was suggested that we could hire or buy portable toilets and this item will also be on the agenda of the next EC Meeting.
- Bill Barnard asked whether people could pay by card at the entrance and John Youngs replied. He said that we have the facility but the mobile phone signal is not reliable enough. This could be rectified if we had a landline.
- Bill Barnard asked whether entry prices would remain the same and the secretary replied that this would be discussed at the next EC Meeting.
- There was a question regarding more seating around the museum site and Pete Farrar said that wood from the racksaw would be used to build more benches.
- It was suggested that volunteers present on the Thursday before each Open Day could be asked to help set up for the Open /day and then volunteers on the Tuesday afterwards could also help to clear the site.
- A gentleman who sells pottery in the Barn on Open Days asked if anything could be done to improve the lighting in there. John Youngs agreed that we could enhance the lighting although there are some portable floodlights.
- Dennis Trebble reported that in order to renew our Insurance cover we had a visit from an NFU H&S expert who pointed out 16 areas of concern. In October the museum received a document stating that we had dealt with all areas.
- John Youngs explained that when we insure the Museum site we only insure those building owned by the National Trust. We are considering insuring our own self-constructed buildings as well.
- There was a query about our ongoing discussions in the past regarding a fire escape in the Colin Cook collection area. It was explained that safety has been considered to be adequate.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed by the Chairman

Date

