

THE MUSEUM OF CAMBRIDGE

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Museum on Thursday 1 December 2016 at 7pm

Present

Friends of the Museum: Sarah Ingram (Chair), Chris Freeman (treasurer and minutes), John Flood, Eileen Flood, Eunice Botwright, Peter Filby, Susan Woodall, Ann Watson, Peter Watson, Tony Wicken (director), Carolyn Ferguson, Honor Ridout, Margaret Skempton, David White (director), Allan Brigham (director), Lucy Walker (director), Caroline Biggs (director)

University appointed director: Josh Nall

Staff: Lorna O'Brien, Sharon Langdon-Ellis, Charlotte Woodley

1. Apologies

Friends of the Museum: Alicja Barton, Hugh Barton, Chris Johnson, Hugh Johnson, Lilian Dench, Anne Murley, John Martin, Caroline Wilson.

2. **Minutes of previous AGM** held 18 November 2015 approved as a correct record.

3. **Minutes of EGM** held on 17 October 2016 approved as a correct record.

4. **Matters arising.** None

5. Annual reports

- 5.1 The chair referred members to her report included in the annual accounts. She highlighted the positive impact of new projects – Capturing Cambridge funded by Cambridge city council, the growing collaboration with Kettle's Yard and the arrival of the Ward painting – on the Museum's reputation and thanked the Manager, her staff and the volunteers for their invaluable contribution to the significant improvements which had taken place over the year.
- 5.2 There was no report from the chair of the Friends as there had been little activity while the constitutional changes were in progress.
- 5.3 The chair noted that, under the revised constitution, it was intended to appoint two directors to represent the views of the Friends. At her invitation, John Flood gave a presentation on the experience and skills which would make him a suitable candidate for one of these co-options and it was unanimously approved to ask the board to offer one of these appointments to him.
- 5.4 Margaret Skempton, treasurer of the Friends, had circulated accounts for the period 1 April 15 to 3 November 16. A final balance of £4476.41 would be passed to the Museum. It was noted that this sum included £500, donated by Ann Watson, for Friends' activities. Allan Brigham presented her with a bouquet in thanks and recognition of her important contribution over recent years.
- 5.5 Lorna O'Brien had circulated her Manager's annual report (appended). She outlined the next stages of Capturing Cambridge (subject to January 17 grant decision of Cambridge city council); the Esmee Fairbairn Trust grant for collections projects; the importance of fundraising for educational work and the work of her staff including the significant advances in documentation and maintenance of the collection achieved by Charlotte Woodley.

6. Treasurer's report

- 6.1 Chris Freeman presented the Museum's final annual report and accounts for the year ending 31 March 2016. These had been approved by the Council of Management.
- 6.2 She thanked the Museum Manager and the Finance Administrator for their assistance.
- 6.3 She noted
 - The Statement of Financial Activity (page 7) which showed an overspend of £65,718 resulting in a reduced surplus of £108,478 in unrestricted reserves at 31 March 2016
 - The Council of Management had agreed to this overspend using some of the generous legacies received in 14-15 to improve staffing levels, including the appointment of a full-time manager and administrator, which would enable the Museum to develop and improve its services.
 - Annual grant aid from Cambridge city council contributes to the costs of

Capturing Cambridge; otherwise the Museum is financially dependent on insufficient income from admissions, events, shop and tearoom sales and donations. These barely cover the city council's rent of over £25,000 pa.

- The Manager was congratulated on her rigorous pursuit of other sources of funding but grant options usually attached to specific projects and rarely helped with basic running costs.
- The long term financial survival of the Museum depends on successful future fundraising. Josh Nall emphasised that the museum can only be professionally staffed if sponsorship, donations and legacies are generated.
- Section 15 of the accounts detailed restricted reserves; page 19 listed specific income and expenditure for the year.

7. Election of the Board of Directors

- 7.1 Josh Nall (University appointed director) took the chair for this item.
- 7.2 It was noted that the elections would be conducted under the revised constitution in 2017.
- 7.3 Chris Freeman and Michael Knapp were not standing for re-election and were warmly thanked for their service including CF's work as treasurer and her initiative in developing and seeking funds for the Capturing Cambridge . Ari Volkanis, co-opted in 2016 had stood down.
- 7.4 The remaining directors - Sarah Ingram, David White, Tony Wicken, Allan Brigham, and Caroline Biggs - stood down and sought re-election, in accordance with the constitution.
- 7.5 All were elected by the Friends present with one abstention

8. Appointment of Independent Examiners for year ending 31st March 2015

Chris Freeman proposed the re-appointment of Prentis and Co which was approved. .

9. Any other business

- 9.1 Eileen Flood requested that following AGMs were timed to begin at 7.15pm to allow those attending to access local parking spaces. Agreed.
- 9.2 It was noted, with thanks, that Michael Williamson had offered to help with finances until a new treasurer could be found. The chair is actively seeking much needed additions to the board; a new recruitment and induction pack had been prepared. Lucy Walker stated that it was important that the board reflected the cultural profile of the city.

10. Date of next AGM

To be confirmed by the directors

Appendix to item 5.3

Museum Manager's report (Lorna O'Brien).

Over the year and a half, I have been with the Museum, there have been lots of changes and a lot of activity. I would like to thank the Trustees, Friends, Staff, Volunteers and everyone associated with the Museum for their hard work, commitment and ongoing support. There have been challenges alongside achievements. We have seen a turnover of staff and volunteers which can create difficult gaps but then brings new energy, perspective and ideas. We have very interesting work and projects going on and being planned and the Museum has gathered strength. 2016 is our 80th Anniversary year and I hope we will continue to build on successes, becoming more sustainable and able to enjoy a bright future ahead.

There has been an impressive amount of activity over 2015/16 building our profile, networks and connections, engaging wider audiences and diverse communities. Such development does take time and crucially depends on a foundation of organisational stability and continuity to build confidence in our supporters, funders and potential funders. Investing in that time is the only way to create those firm foundations.

Our work with communities and diverse audiences as part of Capturing Cambridge is establishing the Museum as an inclusive, participatory, outward looking organisation. The role, purpose and position of Museums in society is

changing and we need to actively embrace change to become relevant and meaningful to the widest possible audiences whilst retaining the unique character that our existing audiences love. Our community activity will broaden its reach with new partnerships across the County as part of Tracing Traditions, a two and a half year project funded by Esmee Fairbairn Collections Fund – delivered by the Museums Association. Through our Cambridge History Festival we will work with partners and bring together speakers and practitioners of interest and importance in the field of social history, engaging wide audiences in the heritage of this area.

The activity detailed in the Annual Report reflects the variety of audience engagement approaches that have been taken over the year. Connections have been made and partnerships created which we will nurture and develop. Our relationships with our colleagues in the Museum sector are improving all the time and will lead to productive future collaborations.

Organisational development is already underway internally through the work of the Trustees in reviewing the governance of the Museum as outlined in the Annual Report. There are ongoing difficulties around the Museum's identity which we aim to address through further organisational work which we will seek funding for. The Museum's financial position needs to be stabilised and this will be addressed similarly through development, funding and fundraising, projects, partnerships, improved and new income streams.

The Museum benefits from its position as a much-loved institution, a place that has resonance in peoples' memories, a surprising and delightful place to those experiencing it for the first time. The development around us, most significantly at Kettle's Yard will increase the profile of this part of Cambridge as a cultural destination and we must capitalise on that, working with Kettle's Yard and the other local organisations to provide an excellent visitor welcome and experience.

I am confident in and committed to the success of the Museum, if we did not think it was worth it we would not all care so much about it. Despite ups and downs familiar to many small organisations, this Museum is still here and still valued after 80 years. It is still relevant and can be ever more so as we adopt a dynamic outlook, responding to the changing city around us whilst preserving the history and heritage of its people for future generations to discover and explore.

Thank you for your continued support.