

THE FRIENDS OF SHAKESPEARE'S CHURCH

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

16th June 2019 at 4pm

Present: Alan Haigh (Chairman), Revd Steve Jarvis, Graham Poole (Treasurer), Trustees; Jane Hornby, Pat Pilton, David Austin, Richard Hartley, Sue Holt (Minutes) plus many members of the Friends.

- 1. Welcome by the Chairman:** Chairman, Alan Haigh welcomed all to the meeting and explained the Friend's President, Reverend Patrick Taylor, was absent due to him taking a sabbatical. Alan spoke fondly of Professor Ronnie Mulryne remembering him as a great contributor to the success of the Friends and what a sad loss to the community. A limited edition print of Holy Trinity church has been donated to the Friends and will be raffled at the end of the meeting.
- 2. Apologies:** Apologies were received from Peter Summers, Mike Warrillow, Jeremy Pragnell, Gay Gott, Phylis and Will Davies, Ruthie Copeman, Anthony Woollard, Ursula Russell, Jean Holder, Julia Woodhouse, Margaret Argyle, Tony Bird, Jane Armitage and Joan Forbes.
- 3. Minutes of the previous AGM – 10th June 2018**

The minutes had previously been distributed to members. The Chairman asked that the Minutes were amended in section 9, third paragraph a to read:

Mr Lindsay MacDonald raised some money-making suggestions such as linking up with Bancroft Cruisers but the Chairman said for this to go ahead the boats would have to dock in The Dell which is owned by the RSC might require a significant fee for its use.

Otherwise the minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.
- 4. Election of two Trustees from the membership of the Friends.** Jane Hornby and Pat Pilton indicated they were happy to continue to stand as representatives. No other nominations having been received. The Chairman moved to re-elect Jane and Pat as representatives of the Friends to the Trustees which was unanimously approved. At the APCM of Holy Trinity in April, Lindsay MacDonald was reappointed as one of the PCC representatives. With the retirement of John Cohen, Mike Warrillow was also elected at the APCM to be the second PCC representative.
- 5. Annual Report and Future Plans:** The Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for the period 1st January 2018 to 31st December 2018 were presented to the AGM which outlined the activities of the Charity over the past year.

The Chairman remarked the activities of the Friends had been quiet over the past 12 months, due to being in the fortunate position of receiving a bequest and having no need to draw on reserves. The Friends have recently benefitted from another

bequest of £10,000, Alan asked members to kindly and generously consider remembering the Friends in their will.

This coming twelve months will see the fundraising activities step up a gear. There is work to be completed on the south side with crumbling stonework and the roof above the south aisle is leaking slightly. Although not everyone agrees with opening up the North Transept, there are some beautiful features that are currently hidden from view such as the altar, piscine and funerary. The area has the potential to be used as a shared space for display and educational purposes, with redesigned housing for choir robes. The King James Bible is not in the best condition and it would be desirable to display it more prominently, a conservator has recently inspected the bible and the results of the conservators report are awaited. The cost of the repairs and development of the North Transept requires £300,000 of funds.

On 24th September, a fundraising launch is planned and the Bishop is attending. The aim of which is to explain the new project and what is planned to achieve the target, all members of the Friends are invited to attend. An application will be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant for the preservation and conservation of the King James Bible. Although grants are not usually given to religious organisations the historical significance of the bible means we could attract funds.

Alan would like to grow the membership of the Friends and he intends to write a letter as Chairman of the Friends to all local residents to invite them to become members.

Comments were invited from those present:

- Debs Follett suggested having the Friends pamphlet's in prominent positions particularly by the entrance to the church door.
- Philip Cheshire asked as the Friends were taking responsibility for the maintenance of the King James Bible are we to be held liable for the many other artefacts held by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. Alan advised that creating a digitised copy of the King James Bible had been considered making its contents accessible to all.
- Anne Blair suggested writing to old members asking them to renew their membership with a pamphlet reminding people of what we do and why we are here. However, the new GDPR legislation may prevent former members from being contacted and Steve Jarvis recommended if new pamphlets are printed they should include the correct GDPR declarations.
- Anne Morgan asked if the replacement of the chairs will precede the North Transept project. The Chairman replied the Friends are not involved in the purchase of the chairs and as they are a PCC project.

All were in favour of accepting the Annual Report.

6. Accounts and Financial Reports for the period ended 31st December 2018:

The Treasurer, Graham Poole, presented the Accounts and Reports for the Financial Year ended 31st December 2018. An abridged copy of the Accounts had been circulated to all members with the notice of the AGM. The principle expenditure in 2018 had been £40,000 for the South Transept wall repairs. £1500 had been given

for the ongoing preservation work of the hatchments and £52 for hydrangea plants in the churchyard.

For some years the Friends have been running without a clerk; however the need for administration support has been identified. The employment of a clerk is expensive with obligations placed on employers, such as National insurance contributions and workplace pensions. An agreement has been reached with the Parish Office to provide administration support. This make practical solution will however cause expenditure in this area to increase.

The current Treasurer, Graham Poole, is standing down as he has completed a term of five years. Jane Armitage has accepted the position of Treasurer and is familiar with the accounts as she has audited the accounts as the independent Examiner for a number of years. Clearly, Jane will not be able to fulfil this role in future years.

All were in favour of accepting the Accounts and Financial Reports.

The Chairman thanked Graham for his diligent and thorough work and he is pleased Graham will continue in the role of membership secretary.

- 7. Appointment of Independent Examiner:** An alternative Independent Examiner has not been found in time to gain approval from the Friends at the AGM. If anyone has any suggestions of someone who may be interested in the role, the Trustees would be very pleased to hear them. The Chairman asked for agreement that the Trustees could act on behalf of the members of the Friends by selecting and appointing an Independent Examiner. This was agreed.

8. Any Other Business:

Pauline Tait queried her membership renewal which Graham would investigate.

The meeting closed at 4.40pm with the drawing of the raffle for the donated print which was won by Revd John Hall-Matthews.

Immediately following the meeting, the Board of Trustees met to decide and agree roles of the trustees for following 12 months.

- Alan Haigh will continue to serve as Chairman
- David Austin was appointed Vice-Chair
- Jane Armitage was appointed Treasurer
- Graham Poole will continue to serve as Membership Secretary