

The Fakenham Society

June 2020

Dear Friend

Fakenham Society Annual General Meeting

When I wrote to you back in April, I said that we hoped to hold our 2019 – 2020 AGM at the first meeting of next season, on 1 October. Given the ongoing uncertainty about when societies like ours will be able to meet, the new Committee members met by video conference and decided that it would be better to deal with the formalities of the AGM now by letter. This is unorthodox but, given the exceptional circumstances, it seems the most practical way of dealing with things.

I am therefore attaching:

- The agenda for the meeting scheduled for 19 March 2020
- The minutes of the 2019 AGM
- The report from Harry Yates in behalf of the Fakenham Museum of Gas and Local History, for information
- A summary of the Society's final accounts, signed by Roy Gibson and myself, with a report by our outgoing Treasurer Sinny Mallett
- A report from our outgoing Chairman, Phil Parry

If there are any queries about any of these documents please send them to me within the next 14 days, otherwise the Committee will assume that members are happy with the contents.

One matter which does require members' approval is the election of the Fakenham Society Committee for the year 2020/2021. The nominations are as follows:

Society officers:

Chairman	Susan Riddle
Vice Chairman and Membership Secretary	David Riddle
Treasurer	Annie Cooper (new Committee member)
Secretary	David King (new Committee member)

Committee members

Steve Brettell, Andy Cooper (new Committee member), Steve Fuell, Trish Fuell, Phil Parry, Sue Parry

If you have any objections to the election of the above committee members, please inform me within 14 days, otherwise we shall assume your consent.

I am delighted that John Birt is continuing as our President and he has sent us a message as follows:

'Dear Member

What extraordinary times we are living in. For the best part of three months, we have been more or less confined to our homes, unable to be with our families, the children unable to go to school, we can't go shopping, and Fakenham Society couldn't hold its AGM!

Fortunately, we have our excellent Committee, ably led by Susan Riddle who must now be hoping we are all going to confirm her elevation to Chairman, and that David King will be confirmed as Secretary and Annie Cooper as Treasurer. Our planned AGM by email and post will be a first for me.

Anyway, I am looking forward to our hoped for restart in October. Meanwhile, at least we can now go to Wells beach for a walk along the sands and have a takeaway cup of tea and a bun from the café there, which is progress.

My best wishes to you all – John Birt – President'

Beech House
1 Orchard Close
Fakenham NR 21 8HF

01328 855270

secretary@fakenhamsociety.org.uk

Finally, I would very much like to thank Sinny Mallett and Chris Dawson for their ten+ years service on the Committee and Phil Parry for his three years of Chairmanship. If any of you would like to join our Committee, there is still room for one more member so, don't be shy, just get in touch with me.

Fingers crossed, our 2020/21 season will start on Thursday 1 October, and we very much hope to see your there! I will be in touch with you again when things are clearer but, in the meanwhile, do please contact me with any queries, news or comments.

With kind regards and very best wishes to you all.

Susan

Susan Riddle, on behalf of the Committee of the Fakenham Society

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Originally scheduled 19 March 2020 at 7.15pm

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2019 AGM
3. Matters arising
4. Reports
 - Gas Museum (Harry Yates)
 - Treasurer's report (Sinny Mallett)
 - Chairman's report (Phil Parry)
5. Election of Officers
 - Chairman Susan Riddle
 - Vice Chairman and Membership Secretary David Riddle
 - Treasurer Annie Cooper
 - Secretary David King
6. Election of Committee members
 - Steve Brettell, Andy Cooper, Steve Fuell, Trish Fuell, Phil Parry, Sue Parry

Fakenham Society - Minutes of AGM held on 21 March 2019

Apologies were received from seven members.

Minutes of the 2019 AGM were agreed

Matters Arising The Chairman reported on a number of proposed visits

Gas Museum report was given by Ann Harris, a volunteer organiser at the Museum who gave a comprehensive update on progress at the museum.

Financial Report

Sinny Mallett presented the Financial Report. The accounts were accepted.

The annual paid membership decreased by one to 132 over 2018/19 while guest attendance increased from 33 to 72 (mostly due to the Elly Griffith talk).

Chairman's Report

The Chairman

- thanked the retiring and long serving Committee members, and outlined the new Committee members' roles
- reported that the annual subscription would be held at £20 per person with a guest charge of £5 per meeting, provided the Sports Centre did not increase its charges
- encouraged members to actively recruit friends and family to help sustain and grow our membership, ideally to 180
- thanked Sue Parry for putting together next year's programme, which Sue then outlined
- thanked the Committee and Society members for their support.

Election of Officers and Committee

The President John Birt took the chair.

There was no contest for the officer appointments and the following were elected unanimously:

Chairman	Phil Parry
Vice Chairman	David Riddle
Treasurer	Sinny Mallett
Secretary	Susan Riddle
Membership Secretary	Steve Brettell

The Committee members were also elected unanimously:

Christine Dawson, Trish Fuell, Steve Fuell, and Sue Parry.

Acceptance of the Committee elections was unanimously agreed.

The President thanked the Committee for their support. The Chairman Phil Parry returned to the chair.

Comments from the floor

Members thanked the Committee for their work during the season and the AGM closed at 19.50.

Fakenham Museum of Gas
And
Local History
Museum Directors
Annual Report
The Fakenham Society
2019-20

Preamble

The purpose of this paper to notify the membership of the Fakenham Society of the key activities carried out by the Fakenham Museum of Gas and Local History and by the Museum Trust in securing the future of the Museum.

When I was first invited to present his years report I was very tempted to simply rename last year's report and hope that no one remembered what I had said, However, what a difference a few days make

Museum 2019-20

2019-20 has proven to be a defining year in the life of the museum and the Trust, one that has seen the Trust on the cusp of a new lease, releasing the Trust and Museum from a very unwieldy arrangement.

Our relationship is now directly with the site owners National Grid Properties rather than a Management Agreement to operate a museum through a British Gas Norfolk Historic Building Trust Lease

as a result of our last address we were delighted to welcome new volunteers to act as Stewards my thanks to them and the Fakenham Society for their support and Please if you can spend a couple of hours at the museum you would be most welcome.

Museums at Night again proved to be a special event, we were entertained on a chilly night by the Fakenham Euks and we were delighted to have Colin Bye Head of Faculty at the Fakenham Academy give the recital of The Lamplighter, and regaling the audience with tales of his Mentor Mike Bridges.

We hosted an event for the Geological Society, Contaminated Land Section, which was very well attended and brought business to our neighbours the "Wensum Hotel" in the form of an excellent lunch

Visitor numbers continued to hold up but due to continued lack of Stewards we have seen a downturn, however we are looking to strengthen our position with Group Visits, we will report on this next year.

You may recall that last year the museum was subjected to a closure so that extensive work was carried out to ensure that all Buildings were weather-proof and a new coat of Lime-Wash.

This year we are starting a programme of work that was identified in a comprehensive and authoritative report in 2016, the key elements of this Tranche of Work is

1 Electrical

1.1 Phase 1 covers all electrical installation from and including the intake and distribution board, wiring to Retort House, Exhauster House and 3 No Portable Buildings.

1.2 Lighting upgrade to all buildings

1.3 Emergency Lighting as appropriate

1.4 External Lighting

2 Heating

2.1 Replacement of Heating Boiler

2.2 Flush Heating System

2.3 Renew as required

3 Roof Works

3.1 Replace Felting to Flat Roof on Retort House

4 Site Clearance

4.1 Replace wooden Portacabin

4.2 Clear site of unwanted debris and apply Industrial Weed killer to all areas

Trust

Strengthening the Board of Trustees has continued and I am delighted to announce that George Acheson our ex-mayor agreed to come on board and Nick Stone a director of Starfish our IT/Digital advisors and designers has brought a fresh outlook to how we will be seen in the Market Place.

This re-structuring provides the Trust with the strength and depth of diverse knowledge and experience to provide solid governance and innovative guidance to the Museum Management Team.

Job Description and Person Specs developed to aid employment of a Curator to support the Trust move from Managing Agent to Leaseholder with the support of National Grid Properties (NGP)

Following 4 years of negotiation trials and tribulations we are in a position to undertake the Leasehold on the Gasworks and anticipate signing the lease document prior to Museums at Night.

Conclusion

We are very close to securing the long-term future of the museum and it must be remembered that this is a museum of National and indeed International importance and as the custodians have a responsibility to ensure it` future for generations to come.

It may not look or sound like much work has been done but the museum is in a healthier position than it has been for some time.

Can I leave you with a plea **Please give your support to maintaining the museum by Volunteering, without Volunteers there will not be a museum and Fakenham will be the poorer for that.**

Harry Yates

Trustee Museum Director

Insert Bank O/B Here >	£6,001.57	Bank C/B >	£3,647.82	
Insert Cash in hand O/B Here >	£49.20	Cash C/B >	£49.20	
The Fakenham Society				
Income & Expenditure Account - 2019/20				
as at 17 March 2020				
	THIS YEAR		LAST YEAR	
	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure
Membership - Annual	£2,540.00		£2,640.00	
Membership - Casual Visitors	£220.00		£360.00	
Fak Soc Raffle	£60.00		£0.00	
Sale of redundant equipment	£25.00		£0.00	
Outings	£2,177.50		£1,075.00	
Guest Speakers' Expenses		£953.00		£864.00
Public Liability Insurance		£122.60		£117.00
Committee Members' Expenses		£12.85		£51.40
Wine, Tea, Coffee & Mince Pies		£193.50		£149.90
Printing, Postage & Stationery		£254.47		£202.22
Flyer Distribution		£0.00		£86.40
Outings		£2,032.50		£1,027.60
Donation to Annual Charity		£0.00		£0.00
Hire of Lancaster Room		£1,100.00		£1,200.00
Purchase of Equipment - Minor		£270.86		£91.96
Website		£30.00		£50.00
Loss/Profit on Season		£52.70		£234.50
	£5,022.50	£5,022.50	£4,075.00	£4,075.00
Balance Sheet				
Bank balance at Start of Season	£6,001.57		£4,695.62	
Less advance receipts	-£2,202.45		-£1,075.00	
Less unrepresented cheques	-£134.00		-£180.00	
Plus advance payments	£0.00		£0.00	
Net cash at bank	£3,665.12		£3,440.62	
Cash in Hand	£49.20		£39.20	
Loss/Profit on Season	£52.70		£234.50	
Cash at Bank - Gross		£3,647.82		£6,001.57
Less advance trip/mem receipts		£0.00		-£2,202.45
Plus/minus unrepresented cheques		£0.00		-£134.00
Plus advance Hall Hire		£100.00		
Net Cash at Bank		£3,747.82		£3,665.12
Equipment Provision	£2,000.00			
Current Account	£1,747.82			
Cash in Hand		£19.20		£49.20
	£3,767.02	£3,767.02	£3,714.32	£3,714.32

Certified by *Neil Lake*
 AUDITOR - 20/3/2020.

FAKENHAM SOCIETY

TREASURER'S REPORT for period 22nd March 2019 to 19th March 2020

Firstly, I'd like to thank **Roy** and **Phil** for their help with the accounts and **Christine** for her help with the reception table. You will see from the **Income & Expenditure Account & Balance Sheet** that we have a profit of **£52.70** and a carry forward balance of **£3,767.02**. Items of interest:

Under Income

Annual Paid Membership decreased by **5** giving a total of **127**, and **Casual Visitors** decreased by **28** giving a total of **44**.

The trip to **Grimsthorpe Castle** last April produced receipts of **£2,177.50** and incurred payments of **£2,032.50** which gave a surplus to the Society of **£145.00**.

Under Expenditure

Refreshments increased as members were given free tea/coffee on the 5th March in compensation for the non-arrival of the Speaker. Historic films showing floods in East Anglia were shown in lieu of the talk and were much appreciated by the audience.

Hire of the Lancaster Room decreased as the AGM had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus situation.

Minor Equipment totalling **£270.88** was for Norton Internet Protection and Microsoft Office 365 (both for 12 months) and for a large Roller Banner and 1,000 A5 flyers.

Balance Sheet

Gross Cash at Bank is **£3,647.82**. Adding the **£100** paid in advance for the hire of the Lancaster Room and the **Cash in Hand** of **£19.20** brings us back to the carry forward balance of **£3,767.02** as quoted above.

Finally ...

This is my 11th, and last, Treasurer's Report for the Fakenham Society AGM. I have really enjoyed managing your Society's finances since 2009 but it is now time for me to retire.

Cynthia Mallett, Treasurer – 19th March 2020.

Fakenham Society

Chairman's Report – June 2020

It is with much regret that I am not standing in front of our members providing my last chairman's report, as I have now completed my three years as chair. Due to the covid-19 pandemic our season finished abruptly so that we were unable to have our AGM on the 19th March 2020, were unable to attend to the formality of electing a new chair and committee and of course could not hear the speaker for the evening.

In these unusual circumstances, I as the existing chair, and the existing committee, took the practical steps of accepting the election of the new chair, Susan Riddle, and the proposed new committee members. This permitted those committee members that wished to resign to then step down, and the new committee members to take up the reins to make sure that the Fakenham Society can proceed to plan for the future.

During my time as chairman I have overseen a substantial change to the membership of our committee, and to the appointment of a new President, John Birt, stepping in after the sad demise of Dr Michael Bridges. Since the 2016/17 season we have had eight out of twelve committee members retire. The retirees have all acted as committee members for a number of years, and after much sterling work, deserve to sit back and enjoy the entertainment provided by the Fakenham Society. At the end of this last season Sinny Mallett, our treasurer, and Chris Dawson, her assistant, have retired. I thank them both for all their efforts over the years, and in particular I would like to thank Sinny for her eleven years attending to our finances and leaving us with a healthy Balance Sheet. Even in a difficult 2019/20 season you have seen from the accounts that we achieved a profit of £52. May I also thank Roy Gibson for independently checking our accounts.

Our 2019/20 season kicked off way back in April 2019 with a visit to Grimsthorpe Castle. Unfortunately, I was unable to go at the last minute but I received lots of positive feedback which even included "that was the best trip we have ever had with the Fakenham Society". Thanks to our Vice-Chair David Riddle for organising this trip.

Our trip this year was to be the Richard III Experience on 31st March 2020. This had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers which proved to be fortunate in that by then we were in the grips of a pandemic.

I must congratulate my wife, Sue Parry, as speaker finder, for another excellent season of talks. The highlights for me were Joyce Hampton on "The Huguenots", and Andy Cooper on "Drones – the future or a menace". Andy's talk gave rise to an unprecedented Q&A session lasting 30 minutes. We also had a very enjoyable "Christmas Do" with Pat Nearny as the comedian. Vic Tucker and Barry Barnes gave us the opening entertainment, followed by mainly committee members doing a 10-minute playlet "Cinderella". This was done under the guidance of Mr and Mrs Steve Brettell. If you haven't seen the video of this on our website then I advise you to do so.

Returning to more mundane matters, your committee is planning a new season as from October 1st 2020 with no increase in our subscriptions, and we are informed that no rent increase will occur for 2020/21. These are of course uncertain times and there are many things to consider. However we must plan for the future and your committee hope we can see you all again in October.

Best wishes to Susan Riddle, as the new chair, and to the committee.

Phil Parry .