

THE FRIENDS OF GUILDFORD HOUSE

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in The Guildhall, Guildford on Wednesday, 19th April 2023 at 2.30pm.

Present:

Committee:	Barbara Logan	Co-Chairman
	Hilary Leigh	Co-Chairman
	Greta Willis	Hon. Secretary
	John Surrey	Hon. Treasurer
	Gwyneth Craske	Visits Organiser
	Tessa Johnson	
	Phyl Morris	
	Pauline Read	

and 36 members.

Barbara Logan chaired the meeting. She opened it by welcoming all those present saying how good it was to see them at the 2023 AGM.

Barbara explained that Lady Hamilton had sent her apologies as she could not be with us as she had had a fall and badly injured her back. In fact, sadly, she had resigned as our Patron. Lady Hamilton had been a very supportive Patron for many years, attending our AGMs and taking a keen interest in the Friends. We will miss her. The Committee plan to send her a token of our appreciation.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies had been received from Lady Hamilton, Sheila Beswick, Monica Bowen, Mary Broughton, David Cade, Val Charles, John & Sheila Collins, Ann Dudley, Francis Eggo, Ann Fearey, Shirley Graber, Mike & Angela Joule, Kate Pearmain, David Peters, Christine Stacey, Audrey Stark, Dorothy Seymour and Elaine Taylor.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on Wednesday 22nd April 2022.

The minutes had been circulated with the Agenda. Their adoption was proposed by Pauline Surrey, seconded by Julia Cade and agreed by the meeting. They were signed by the Co-chairmen. Barbara Logan and Hilary Leigh.

3. Matters Arising.

None.

4. Annual Report.

Barbara Logan drew members attention to the detailed Annual Report that had been circulated with the Agenda as part of the AGM mailing. She summarised the various outings and lectures and thanked Gwyneth Craske and Beryl Davies for their hard work in relaunching the programme so successfully following the AGM in 2022. Unfortunately, like other organisations the number of participants in our activities had fallen since the pandemic so we had teamed up with the Friends of the Museum and Friends of the Cathedral to offer our events to each other. She emphasised that members support was essential as visits could not be run at a loss.

Barbara also drew attention to the fact that several key members of the present Committee wished to retire. In spite of pleas for computer literate members to volunteer, only one member had come forward – Sylvia Jones. We are very grateful to her. If a complete committee cannot be

mustered, an EGM will take place in October to decide the future of The Friends of Guildford House.

Sadly three long standing members of the Friends had died recently. Iris Hawkins, who was curator of Guildford House and founder of the Friends died in December. Nancy Butcher, a long serving committee member and Rosemary O'Brien a long standing and staunch member have died more recently.

5. Hon. Treasurer's Report.

Copies of the accounts had been distributed at the beginning of the meeting. They had been prepared by John Surrey (Hon. Treasurer) and reviewed by Arthur Savage, the External Independent Examiner. The figures were self-explanatory, but John added the following details : –

Visits had made a small profit of £121.00.

Bank charges were up as transactions by cheques were now chargeable.

Surplus of income over expenditure for the year was £548.00.

The charitable donation of £500.00 was to Cherry Trees for an art project.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Tessa Johnson, seconded by Pauline Read and adopted by the meeting.

6. Election of Officers.

In spite of urgent requests, there had been no nomination for Chairman. Barbara Logan thanked Sylvia Jones for offering to help as Joint Secretary.

Interim Chairman until October:- Hilary Leigh.

Proposed – Liz Coult, seconded – Coral McGinn, elected unanimously.

Joint Hon. Secretaries:-

Sylvia Jones – *proposed* – Greta Willis, *seconded* – Barbara Logan.

Greta Willis – *proposed* – Barbara Logan, *seconded* – Sheila Beswick.

Both were elected unanimously.

Hon. Treasurer:- John Surrey.

Proposed – Pauline Surrey, seconded – Greta Willis, elected unanimously.

7. Election of Committee.

The serving members of the committee were all willing to stand for re-election.

Gwyneth Craske (Visits) – *proposed* – John Surrey, *seconded* – Fiona Williams.

Beryl Davies (Lectures) – *proposed* – Beverly Healing, *seconded* – Olive Wholey.

Ann Fearey – *proposed* – Hilary Leigh, *seconded* – Beryl Davies.

Tessa Johnson – *proposed* – Greta Willis, *seconded* – Ann Hyde.

Phyl Morris – *proposed* – Gwyneth Pickering, *seconded* – Barbara Logan.

Pauline Read – *proposed* – Dorothy Seymour, *seconded* – Jane Olds.

They were elected unanimously en-bloc.

8. Appointment of External Independent Examiner.

Arthur Savage had been our Independent Examiner during the past year. John Surrey thanked him and proposed that he be re-elected. This was unanimously agreed.

9. The Future of the Friends of Guildford House.

Hilary Leigh introduced the discussion by pointing out, that in spite of urgent requests for fresh, computer literate members to join the committee, only one person had come forward. As Hilary had already explained, she would act as Chairman until October, when if the situation had still not been resolved, an EGM would be called. She asked for comments from the meeting. There was a general consensus that members wished 'The Friends' to continue, but no constructive

suggestions as to how. Discussion took place about ways of collecting payment for subscriptions, outings, etc on line to alleviate the use of cheques but this was not welcomed by most of the members present.

10. Any Other Business.

Gwyneth Craske (Visits Organiser) pointed out that we needed more members to support our outings in order for the visits programme to be viable and to this end some visits were being opened to the Friends of the Museum, the Friends of the Cathedral and the Art Society. She reminded the meeting of the current programme – in May to the National Gallery to the 'After Impressionism' exhibition, in June to Chichester to Pallant House to see the exhibition of Gwen John's work and in July to Loseley house and garden.

Before the end of the meeting, Ann Hyde, a long standing member, thanked Barbara who was retiring from Office and the Committee, for all that she had done for The Friends of Guildford House. She pointed out that Barbara had been involved in various Committee roles for a third of her life. Not only had she organised many interesting visits to Art Galleries, Stately Homes and Gardens, but also cultural holidays both in the UK and abroad. They were always efficiently run and one knew that one was in safe hands – even the occasional medical emergency did not phase her. In addition, at one time she used to organise wonderful winter lunches and summer suppers for the 'Friends' at Burchetts Barn, catering for up to 75 people herself. Ann ended by saying that Barbara really was Mary Berry, Trailfinders and St. John's Ambulance all rolled into one! as well as a friend to all of us. She presented Barbara with some flowers and a gift voucher as a token of the 'Friends' love and appreciation.

The meeting closed at approximately 3.0pm. Members then enjoyed tea and cakes before reassembling for a talk by David Rose entitled 'Origins of Street and Road Names in Guildford'.
