

**FRIENDS OF THE OLD CHURCH, ALVESTON
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 19TH JUNE 2007 AT 8.00 PM
IN THE MALT HOUSE, ALVESTON**

In Attendance

Jean Abbey, Paul Abbey, Howard Blessington, Rob Cobley, Mike Coigley, Sylvia Coigley, Jane Dodge, John Fox, Martin Grubb, Rachel Grubb, Brian Johnson (in the Chair), David Tucker, Richard Williams, Peter Woodhams,

Apologies

Geoff & Judith Benney, Sandi Blake, Stephen Dodgson, Dawn Dodgson, Iris Johnson, Carrie Tucker, Louise Tucker

Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the 2006 Annual General Meeting, distributed with the Notice of the AGM, were discussed. Mike Coigley asked that "Dr Coigley" be changed to Mike & Sylvia Coigley in the minutes, which was agreed. The amended minutes were proposed by Martin Grubb and seconded by Rob Cobley and agreed and they were then signed as a true record of the meeting by the Chair.

It was noted that the Herald did produce an article about the Rededication and Brian thanked Richard Williams for submitting it to them.

Annual Report

Brian Johnson presented the Report for the Year.

During the last financial year an altar was donated anonymously and is now in use every Thursday. Brian thanked Margaret Phythian for making the new altar cloths, an altar dust cover and a refurbished altar cushion.

Maintenance of the churchyard continues to be carried out by Gordon Jeacock and Martyn Ironmonger. The churchyard is now in a good balance: neat but not suburban and allowing some thicker foliage on its margins to encourage wild life. A new mower will be purchased shortly.

In March this year a tree surgeon carried out two days of maintenance work on the lime trees which were too tall for Gordon and Martyn to reach.

A team of helpers did a vigorous Spring Clean on 23rd March 2007 in readiness for the Alveston Open Gardens Day on 15th April 2007. More than 200 people visited the church on that day and many bought a booklet or made a donation.

A major event of the year was the rededication of the church by the Bishop of Warwick on 11th June 2006. A marvellous flower display was provided by Jean Abbey and her team. Jean also organised the flowers on the Open Day and again when the Bishop revisited the church to dedicate the altar. Brian thanked Jean and her helpers for their hard work and the very beautiful flowers.

Regarding Faculty matters the Stratford-on-Avon Town Trust plaque which acknowledges their gift of £10,000 is now officially covered by a Faculty. The Faculty for a Notice Board has now been granted and installation work will start shortly.

The saga of the Piers and electricity has now moved on to a point where the application for a Faculty is in the pipeline. The date of final approval is uncertain but we hope to complete the work before the end of 2007.

There were discussions during the year about the state of the verges. There has been no satisfactory resolution. Vehicles continue to damage the verges on both sides of Mill Lane.

In order to satisfy the Stratford-on-Avon Town Trust regarding usage of the church by a wider community we are looking at the possibility of educational projects. A tree survey is currently in progress. It is anticipated that the results of this survey can be used for educational purposes.

Other items include: a credence table which is to be made by Howard Lucas; a bench which will be situated in the churchyard; and possibly repairs to the lectern.

The Committee is considering a Musical Evening in late summer/early autumn in the churchyard.

Finally Brian offered his thanks to the Committee who have been very supportive and enthusiastic during his year in office and also thanked Jane Dodge for chasing up Tax Relief on charitable donations to extremely good effect.

In summary Brian advised that reasonable progress had been made this year. He would have liked to have installed the piers and the electricity by now but the Faculty process is now nearing completion. Financial situation is healthy, with more than £1,000 coming in each year as interest.

He believes that the church and churchyard are now in good order and that future expenditure can be matched by income. It is hoped that one or two events will be held each year so that the charity is not forgotten.

Brian then wished Peter Woodhams good luck for the coming year.

Financial Report

Jane Dodge explained that the majority of the income this year (£3,171) was received from HMRC for Gift Aid for the previous three years (2003-4, 2004-5, and 2005-6). There were also donations of £203 from various sources, including the very successful Alveston Open Gardens. The Bank Interest of £1,182 comprises £948 from CafBank and £234 from HMRC who very kindly paid interest on the Gift Aid paid.

Expenditure of £1,653 related to the very successful Re-dedication Ceremony presided over the Bishop of Warwick (£818), Insurance of £300 and production of Old Church Booklets (£450) which were updated and sold at the Alveston Open Gardens in 2006 and 2007.

We still have a very healthy balance in our account of £22,392 taking us forward into the next financial year.

John Fox queried why there was no Independent Examiner's report this year. Jane advised it was due to income being under £10K. John also advised that Ecclesiastical Insurance had now been alerted to the Old Church insurance advised that St James had now got a policy which included both. The PCC would be looking for a similar contribution to last year. It was agreed that the Old Church should be locked at night.

Jane Dodge thanked Rosie Hyde for all her help in producing the accounts in the correct SORP format.

Election of Officers

Jane Dodge advised that the only elections to be made are the Chairman and Secretary and Treasurer. As per the constitution the Chair shall rotate between members of Alveston Villagers' Association and the Parochial Church Council of Alveston alternately which means that Peter Woodhams is standing this year. It was proposed by Richard Williams and seconded by Rob Cobley that Peter Woodhams be Chairman. Jane Dodge is happy to continue in the role of Secretary and Treasurer and it was proposed by Richard Williams and seconded by John Fox that Jane Dodge be elected. Both motions were unanimously agreed by the members. Brian Johnson then went onto explain that there is a discrepancy in our Constitution regarding election of officers which Brian will clarify with the Charity Commission before the next AGM.

Any Other Business

Brian advised that the FOTOC Committee are very open to any suggestions. However, implementation can't be guaranteed all ideas will be carefully considered.

Mike Coigley asked about the opening hours of the Old Church and he was advised that the new Notice Board will show the hours of opening.

He also asked about the window light above the altar being opened to let in fresh air. Brian will organise.

Sylvia Coigley thought that the pulpit may have woodworm. It was agreed that this would be investigated and rectified.

Pete Woodhams advised that the tree survey would embrace the historical as well as biological elements of the Churchyard and would be of great use educationally.

David Tucker advised that he was very unhappy with the verges on Mill Lane and that a practical solution must be reached. He also advised that the road was unadopted and therefore the Council would maintain the road or the verges. It was pointed out that the FOTOC had decided that it was outside the remit of the Charity to spend its funds on repair and maintenance of Mill Lane. David advised that he would be very happy to contribute to any costs that would result in a permanent solution to the problem. It was suggested that the AVA also be involved and perhaps have an event to specifically raise funds to solve the problems.

Jean Abbey enquired how often the litter bin at the entrance to the Old Church was being emptied as dog walkers were using it to dump their doggie waste. The FOTOC via the AVA would investigate.

Richard Williams thanked the Committee and especially Jane Dodge for efficiently managing the Friend of the Old Church. Pete Woodhams proposed a vote of thanks to Brian Johnson for his year as Chairman and all agreed that a vote of thanks be given to Martyn Ironmonger and Gordon Jeacock for all their hard work.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55 pm.