

# FRIENDS' SCHOOL, SAFFRON WALDEN

## **OLD SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION**



### **144th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, held on 11 May 2013 at 16.00 at the School**

Richard Haw presiding, and 13 members present.

1. The Chair welcomed those present and a short silence was observed.
2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from: Janet Ashton, Judith Foster, Richard Gilpin, Jane Gorman, Martin Hugall, Trevor Hurrell, Douglas Kent, Caroline Longstreet, Andrew McTear, Peter Nash, Brian Pickard, Ann Wickenden, Graham Wedd, and Valerie Wiseman.
3. **MINUTES:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th November 2012 had been posted on the Old Scholars' website. The meeting agreed that those minutes were a true and accurate record.
4. **MATTERS ARISING:** None.
5. **OBITUARIES:** The Chair read the names of those whose deaths have been reported since November 2012, and a short silence was observed: Sarah France (née Charlton), Mollie Hatch (née Chapman), and Joan Mummary.
6. **REPORTS:**

#### ***(a) Chair***

**(Nigel McTear):** Nigel explained that we were having a 'truncated interim' AGM only six months after the last AGM because it had been agreed that future AGMs should be held in May rather than November, and the General Committee had judged that it would be preferable to have a six-month gap to an eighteen-month one.

The General Committee had met once in the past six months. Nigel said that the development of arrangements with the School, designed to bring the Association and School closer together for mutual advantage, was proceeding in the right direction but that the pace was slow in the absence to date of a Foundation Office nominee with whom to liaise. Other Schools had benefited from such arrangements and he foresaw that they would likewise make a difference to FSSW.

Nigel reiterated the Old Scholars' thanks to Richard Gilpin for his six-year Editorship of the Magazine. He was glad to learn that the School was planning to keep the Magazine going, and looked forward to learning more about the manner and format being considered.

### ***(b) Treasurer***

***(Andrew McTear, read by Nigel McTear):*** This report, Andrew's 25th as Treasurer, was the first in which no year end had fallen. The Constitution of the Association provides that the Association's year end should change to match that of the school. As this is the first full accounting period of the School being responsible for meeting the costs of the Association, that change happens this year. Our financial year end therefore changes to 31 August and for one year only will cover a 17 month period from 1 April 2012 to 31 August 2013. Accordingly, I have no accounts to present. I can, however, report that the Association's financial position remains stable, with about £7,000 cash at bank and the investments held last year intact.

Andrew had been asked to comment on the need to retain the investments held in our Life Members Fund which, at 31 March 2012, stood at £39,118 (at market value). This sum arises from a scheme which operated about 30 years ago by which former Scholars could pay a lump sum for life membership of the Association. The idea was that those funds could be invested and the income from those investments would cover the costs of providing the Annual Report etc to those members. About 15 years ago we did an exercise to identify life members who had passed away and we transferred part of the Life Fund to the general funds. Obviously, more life members will have passed away since then: it would be helpful if the School could tell us how many Life members we currently have. It may be that the Life Fund need not be more than half its present size.

There is a strong argument that the Life Fund is no longer required under our present arrangements with the School. The only circumstances in which we would need such a fund would be if the School withdrew from the new arrangement - which seems highly unlikely. I would therefore say that, as there is likely to be relatively few remaining life members and as the School is underwriting our activities, I would not in principle have any objection to the Life Fund being released and gifted to the School. That would be a decision for the Trustees of the Association, the General Committee, and a future AGM.

### ***(c) Old Scholar on the Board of Governors***

(Douglas Kent had sent his apologies, and looked forward to resuming his reports at the next AGM.)

#### **(d) Head**

**(Graham Wigley):** The Head was delighted that the AGM was being held in the happy aftermath of a successful Friends and Families Day, with great atmosphere, sunshine, the maypole and a real sense of community. He was also able to truncate his report because he had no exam results to comment upon and because Old Scholars had seen the School's programme for the day that included a full summary of the year's activities.

Graham reported that the Governors had recently minuted in favour of pushing the Foundation Office into existence. He would therefore shortly be establishing an internal Development Office to manage events, groups and activities as a precursor to wider fundraising initiatives. He would report on progress at the next AGM and hope then to be able to strengthen the Office. Graham also outlined tentative proposals for a combined School/OS annual Magazine, and introduced a staff member, Elisabeth Ring, whom he had invited to explore the editorial possibilities.

#### **(e) Archivist**

**(Tony Watson):** Tony and Margaret agreed to take up this role last year, and started work in January. The Archives are responsibly housed on the second floor but have received very little attention since Roger Buss died a few years ago. The Watsons have cleared the accumulation of boxes in the middle of the floor and hope soon to have new shelving erected. They have yet to work out how to organise the Archives in the future, including all the relevant digital material generated by the School, so that requested material is reasonably accessible. They envisage the Archives, a significant asset in the development of the School, becoming the responsibility of the future Foundation Office.

The Watsons invited contributions from Old Scholars to the Archives, photographs to be dated and named if possible, requesting that they be sent to the School Marked "Archives".

- 7. HANDOVER OF PRESIDENCY.** The Chair thanked Richard Haw for all his work as President over his eighteen-month term, and invited Clare Thompson (née Parry) to step forward to take up her Presidency. The Chair also announced that Biddy Vousden had consented to be President-Elect, and welcomed her to the deliberations of the General Committee.
- 8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING** The next Annual General Meeting of the Association will take place on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at 16.00 at the School.