

PORTSDOWN U3A
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON 18th NOVEMBER 2015
AT COSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH,
AND REPORT ON MATTERS OF GENERAL DISCUSSION

Beryl Shepherd (Chair) asked Christine London to report on Josephine Burgess. She stated that Josephine was very ill and had moved to be near her daughter. A card was passed round for all to sign.

Carole Chapman read the Notice of the Annual General Meeting.

1. Apologies had been received from Josephine Burgess, Carol and Bill Evans, Steve and Joyce Doe, Marion and Robert Wilson, Ted Harfield, Norah Coote, Shirley Russell, Anne Cole, Lesley Bement, Carole Clifford, Diana and Roger Gregg and Eric Lee.

2. Minutes of the last meeting: the last AGM was held on 19 November 2014. The Minutes had been displayed on the noticeboard all year. They had also been emailed to those members who were online. Some paper copies were also available. Acceptance of the Minutes as an accurate record was proposed by Trevor Evans and seconded by Sharon Searle. The Minutes were so accepted and signed as such by Beryl.

3. Matters Arising: there were no Matters Arising.

4. Chair's Report:

- Beryl pointed out that 2015 has been quite an eventful year for our U3A and especially busy for Carole and myself. Those members connected with the Jutland project have also been very active and as a result 2016 is going to be a spectacular year for Portsdown U3A. Not to mention the Somme film, a high profile lecture and the splendid programme put together by Pam.
- Jeanne and Carole will have more details in their reports.
- The Poppy wreath has now got a permanent home at the WW1 Remembrance Centre at Fort Widley.
- In June we were treated to a wonderful lecture on the Magna Carta from Professor Nicholas Vincent which was enjoyed by all. We are hopeful that this will be the start of an annual lecture on a variety of topics.
- We have successfully completed the paperwork with regard to the Grant we received to build the new website. They are now happy that we have spent it according to the rules. Some Group Leaders will be attending a training session so that they can update their own pages on the website.

- At the AGM last year I told you about my intention to abseil down the Spinnaker Tower which I did on a cold windy day in May. My efforts supported by many of you, my family and friends raised £1,050 for Movember.
- In September I had the pleasure of chairing the GL's annual get together as Carole was in hospital having a much needed hip operation. It is good to see her making such progress. One of the outcomes was that new activity groups were suggested and these are detailed on a leaflet available on the desk or on the website.
- In August, Carole and I attended the National Conference in Nottingham and it was a very enlightening experience and we gained much information that I am sure will be useful to us.
- We discovered that some U3A's invite their members to attend committee meetings as observers. If anyone would like to attend please give your name to Carole and we will do our best to arrange it.
- We were also encouraged to have an In Case of Emergence number (known as ICE) for all our members and as this is good practice we hope that you will be happy to supply the information once our system is able to cope.
- The National Office are encouraging **is** all to have integrated computer systems and they favour one called BEACON. This is written for the U3A and is free to use. I hope to have some more news for you and to arrange training sessions further on down the road.
- We discussed at committee what would be a proper response to the death or illness of members as we are mindful that it is your money.
- It was agreed that the Membership Secretary would send cards on behalf of you all, to members who were seriously ill. Thank you cards would be sent to retiring committee members.
- It was also agreed that the Chairman would send condolences on behalf of Portsdown U3A to the relatives of deceased members and flowers or a donation if the member had been a member of the committee or a group leader. None of these actions can be carried out unless someone lets us know.
- Some of you may have seen the leaflet telling you all about a competition. The idea came to me when I realised that you have all done interesting or exciting things and so I RE-MEMBER WHEN was born. It can be about anything, and although I won't enter the completion I will submit items for the booklet. I Do Remember when I was held hostage because the boss, the then Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, couldn't pay the wages.
- I also blew up the sea wall on Havengore Island and when I lost my handbag in a cabbage field. So take a leaflet or look on the website and start writing.
- A new Network has been born and is called South Central and we are members along with about 12 other local U3A's.

5. Treasurer's Report and the Appointment of an Independent Examiner for the Accounts:

- Beryl reported that Richard has resigned for personal reasons and **so I will** present the accounts to you. As you can see, we had assets of nearly £4,000 and we are in a good healthy position. It has to be said that committee and GL's (and others) subsidise us by using their own resources and premises. It isn't that we don't spend any money, just that we are quite good at getting funding from elsewhere. The idea is that the funds should be used for the benefit of the membership and the committee will consider any suggestions as to what we should do with any surplus. I will do my best to answer any questions that you may have.
- Beryl thanked Richard for his contribution over the last 3 years and also Clive Reid for his Independent Examinations of the documents and the figures that were in front of members.
- The meeting approved the appointment of Clive as Independent Examiner for the coming year. Proposed by Mary Dean and seconded by Julie Jones.

6. Business Secretary's Report:

- Carole reported that 2014-2015 has been an extremely busy year. Personally, I was very grateful for the support of the other members of the Committee after my hip replacement operation in September, especially as Diana looked after me when I came out of hospital. Beryl also covered for me at the Meeting and Appreciation Lunch for Committee Members and Group Leaders and I would like to thank her for that and so much else. I would also like to thank all of the Committee and the Group Leaders for their hard work throughout this year.
- Although a major part of my role centres on the everyday administration of our U3A and contacts with the National Office, it also involves the management of events which, I hope, enhance the experience of our members.
- In February of this year, I organized a day trip to the Imperial War Museum in London. This proved to be a very popular and successful day that fitted in well with our own First World War Centenary activities.
- Amongst the other major anniversaries that have taken place during 2015 was the 800 year commemoration of the sealing of Magna Carta by King John. This seemed to be the ideal opportunity to hold a high profile public lecture, especially as the National Office was offering grants to do that very thing. The visit of Nicholas Vincent, Professor of Medieval History at the University of East Anglia, proved to be a highly successful event that brought together our own members, local visitors and representatives of neighbouring U3As. A lecture of this sort, on a variety of themes, is likely to become a yearly event.
- This year, Beryl and I had the opportunity to attend the National U3A Conference in Nottingham and, as usual, it proved to be very useful as a means of meeting other U3A members and finding out how other groups are managed. Of course, neither of us man-

aged to resist the temptation to volunteer for something! In my own case, it was for the role of Research Ambassador, to help other U3As to get involved in research projects.

- This fits in very well with one of the other major activities of this year, which has been to work with Steve and Jeanne and their teams to apply for and receive funding and support for the Jutland Project. It is an ongoing privilege to be involved in that.
- The other major opportunity has been involvement in intergenerational debating events. This time last year, I was preparing for the debate in the House of Lords. Since then, I have debated at Chartwell and become involved in planning for future occasions. Again, what a privilege to be able to do that on behalf of Portsdown U3A!
- Next year promises to be as busy, if not more so. We have the centenary of Jutland and we will be showing the silent film on the Battle of the Somme to mark that other major anniversary of 1916 to 2016. We will also be offering a lecture, this time on a scientific theme. And we will organize an Open Afternoon. I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to be involved in so many interesting things.

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7. Elections: Beryl explained that the next item was the election of new committee members and introduced Julie Bloomfield, Frankie Challoner, Margaret Fairhead and Judith Jones.

Carole read out the nominations:

Julie Bloomfield – proposed by Audrey Evans and seconded by Mary Chappell

Frankie Challoner – proposed by Julie Bloomfield and seconded by Rosemary Jones

Margaret Fairhead – proposed by Carol Martin and seconded by K. C. James

Judy Jones – proposed by Shana Thomson and seconded by Jeanne Christie

Each of the nominees was individually and duly elected.

Beryl stated that the official business was now concluded and declared this part of the meeting closed.

CLOSURE OF THE FORMAL BUSINESS OF THE MEETING at 2.30pm

8. Interest Group Reports: Beryl explained that Carole would lead on this item as Group Co-ordinator and she is very pleased that Margaret has taken over writing the minutes.

Carole then thanked Group Leaders for their hard work and introduced them.

Group Leaders presented brief reports on their activities and were requested to email these to Joyce for the Newsletter.

Beryl reported that it was hoped to form 5 new groups – Debating, Film, Philosophy, Bridge and Can't Sing.

9. Members' Open Forum:

Nigel Gossop, who retired 2 years ago was now raising money for a gardening charity and there was a craft origami talk on Wednesday 24th ? at Bedhampton.

Beryl wished to record her thanks to Pam as the Speaker Secretary and the committee and the Group Leaders on the membership's behalf for all the hard work they do and she would especially like to thank John, Christine, Diana and Charmian who are retiring from the committee and who between them have served for more than 30 years.

The Open Forum closed at 3.12 pm when tea and biscuits were served.

Signed..... (Chair) Date.....