

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Heather Society held at 9.00am on Sunday, 13th September 2015, at The Leenane Hotel, Connemara, Co. Galway, Ireland

Officers and Councillors Present

Richard Canovan (Hon. Treasurer)
David Edge (Chairman)
Phil Joyner (Hon. Secretary)
Susie Kay
Barry Sellers

With 5 Council Members and 17 ordinary members being in attendance the meeting was deemed quorate.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Dave Brown, John and Val Griffiths, John Hall, Jean McCrindle, Charles Nelson, Anne Small and Josey Stow. These members extended their good wishes to the members present.

2. Opening Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman, David Edge, welcomed the members to the 44th Annual General Meeting of the Heather Society and then followed with his opening statement, the text of which is attached.

The Hon. Secretary, Phil Joyner, thanked the Chairman and his Nursery Staff for bringing the Society to the attention of the public at Hampton Court and the winning of a Silver Gilt for the display, all those members present were in agreement.

3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 14th September, 2014

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 14th September, 2014, at Llanberis, North Wales, had been included in the Conference Folder as well as being published on the website. Jean Preston proposed that the Minutes be accepted as an accurate record of that meeting, seconded by Barry Sellers with agreement by a show of hands from a majority of members present. The Minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

4. Presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2014

The Hon. Treasurer, Richard Canovan, referring to the draft 2014 Accounts, described a good financial position at the end of 2014. He also commented on various items within the same Accounts. He then continued with a brief mention of the current financial situation with a reminder of the purpose of having two bank accounts. He also commented on the requirement to initiate tax reclaims on the last three years.

Daphne Everett commented on the charges associated with the use of PayPal and the Hon. Treasurer elaborated on the difference in the charges between using PayPal for payments and using payment cards via the merchant service provider, First Data, and consequently the future intention to drop the more expensive First Data method of payment.

David Plumridge queried the apparent profit of £1200 on the 2014 Conference but the Hon. Treasurer, with comments from Susie and Alan Kay, explained that there were also payments for the 2014 Conference made in 2013 and that the apparent profit was severely reduced by them.

The Hon. Secretary commented that the presented 2014 Annual Report and Accounts were in a draft form and were currently with the Independent Financial Examiner. The Hon. Secretary then asked for acceptance of the 2014 Annual Report and Accounts subject to any amendments being required by the Independent Financial Examiner. Susie Kay proposed acceptance, seconded by Diane Jones with agreement by a show of hands from a majority of members present.

5. Proposed amendments to the current 2010 revision of the rules

Replace clause 14 with:

The annual subscription and privileges of Members shall be determined by Council. Such subscriptions shall become payable on the anniversary of joining, or on a date determined by

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Council.

Replace clause 15(e) with:

In no circumstances shall any of the assets of the Society at any time be given or paid to any Member except:

- *by way of reimbursement of expenses*
- *as proper remuneration for services rendered to the Society as permitted under the law governing charities such as this Society, or*
- *with the prior written consent of the Commission.*

The Hon. Secretary explained the reasons for the proposed amendments to the rules:

The Clause 14 amendment is because the Society now accepts membership applications, on-line, and those can occur anytime throughout the year so the anniversary of joining is more likely to be a date other than the 1st January and the rules need to allow for that.

The Clause 15e amendment is a consequence of several discussions with the Charity Commission regards Charles Nelson becoming a member of Council but continuing to be paid for his Administrative duties. Council now have written consent from the Charity Commission for this to happen but the Charity Commission have specified the change in the clause to cover this situation.

Susie Kay queried whether the historical subscription dates would remain the same, the Hon. Secretary confirmed that this would be so. Barry Sellers proposed acceptance of the amendments to the rules and Maurice Everett seconded that proposal with agreement by a show of hands from a majority of members present. Consequently the rules will be amended ASAP and submitted, as is required, to the Charity Commission for their records.

6. Appointments by The Heather Society Council

Council has recommended the appointment of John Griffiths as President and Daphne Everett, Pamela Lee, Alice Knight, Kurt Kramer and *ex officio* President of NAHS as Vice-Presidents. Also, now the German Society is no longer in existence, Council has recommended the appointment of Kurt Kramer as a Vice-President in his own right. The Hon. Secretary stated that the recommendation for the appointment of Kurt Kramer is based on his achievements in the breeding of new cultivars and in the promotion of heathers in general. The Hon. Secretary also commented that the President of the NAHS had so far not been appointed. The acceptance of the Council recommendations was proposed by Barry Sellers and seconded by Susie Kay with agreement by a show of hands from a majority of members present.

7. Election of Officers (Nominated by the Council)

The Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer, David Edge, Phil Joyner and Richard Canovan respectively have been nominated by Council for a further year's service. John Plowman proposed acceptance of the nominations, seconded by Daphne Everett with agreement by a show of hands from a majority of members present.

8. Elections of Members of Council

Under rule 6(b) 2010 Ian Duncan Grant, Phil Joyner and Susie Kay had served a 3 year term and, excepting Ian Duncan Grant, had put their names forward for re-election. The Hon. Secretary was in possession of nomination papers for Phil Joyner and Susie Kay, duly completed and signed. John Hall had been co-opted onto Council since the last AGM and the Hon. Secretary was in possession of the nomination paper for that candidate, duly completed and signed. The subsequent re-election of Phil Joyner and Susie Kay and the election of John Hall was agreed by a show of hands from a majority of members present.

Ian Duncan Grant, by not putting his name forward for re-election, is now no longer a member of Council.

9. Appointment of the Independent Financial Examiner

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The Independent Financial Examiner for the 2014 Annual Report and Accounts, Jason Foxwell, had indicated his willingness to examine the 2015 Annual Report and Accounts during 2016. Dee Daneri proposed that Jason Foxwell be re-appointed Independent Financial Examiner and Maurice Everett seconded the proposal with agreement by a show of hands from a majority of members present.

10. Arrangements for the 2016 Annual General Meeting and Conference

The Conference Organiser, Susie Kay, announced that the 2016 Conference would be held at The Royal George Hotel situated in the centre of Perth, Scotland, from Friday 9th September to Monday 12th September with the Annual General Meeting being held at some time during that period. A programme for the weekend is currently well into the planning stage and will include speakers, visits and in particular a viewing of the recent plantings of heathers in Riverside Park in Perth. There was a promise of a carousel of views taken in Riverside Park to be presented by Ally Fitz-Earle later in the evening. Susie Kay invited members, intending to participate, to fill out a booking form and pay their £5 booking fee to Alan Kay.

Meeting concluded @ 9:40am

Certified a true copy of the Heather Society AGM Minutes of the 13th September 2015.

Signed.....Chairman

Dated.....