

## MINUTES OF THE FELLOWSHIP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SUNDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2010

1. **Present:** Bob Anderton (Chair), Alan Shepherd (Secretary), Gordon Nicholson, Reg Andrews, Richard Maher, Brian Smith, Angela Potts, Rod Havercroft, Roger Dyas-Elliott, Roger Sealey, Dilip Dutta, Elcena Jeffers, Art Wright, John Hurlston, Rosie Gardener, Wendy Johns Stan Young, Peter Russell, Jan Smith, Owen Murphy, Frank Simkins, Edward Surridge, Ruth Thwaites, Pauline Hamilton
2. **Apologies:** Debbie Hollingsworth, Richard Andrews, Carol Orgill-Rosen, Anne Sieve, William Patience, Ann Broxham, John Kimberley, Lena Wanford, Mary Dezill, Anji Jeffery

Before starting the business proper the chair informed the meeting that a member with mobility difficulties had not been able to gain access to the AGM because a wheelchair was not available in the building to enable her to move from her car to the Raphael Samuel Room. It was reported that the member had travelled from Dorking. The meeting asked the Secretary to ensure that the Fellowship formally apologised to the member and returned any fees paid. They also asked that the issue be taken up with the College. **AGREED**

3. **Minutes of the AGM held on 13 September 2009:** The minutes were agreed a correct record.

#### 4. **Matters arising from the minutes:**

- i. **Accounts (minute 6 refers):** It was confirmed that last year's AGM was not re-convened to address the annual accounts but that the issue was dealt with by the Executive Committee of the Fellowship at its meeting in November 2009. **NOTED**
- ii) There being no further items arising the minutes were **RECEIVED**

#### 5. **Reports:** It was agreed to take the Treasurer's Report first.

- i. **Treasurer's Report:** A written report was provided by Sally Courtney. Changes during the year included:
  - 1) Creating two accounts, a General Fund and a Student Fund
  - 2) The amalgamation of the Fellowship budget into the College budget through a *Restricted Fund* enabling monies to be reclaimed from the tax office and providing a system of external audit.
  - 3) The reporting of the Fellowship budget in the College Annual Report, in addition to the report to the AGM, as a result of the above amalgamation of budgets.
  - 4) Changing the Fellowship's financial year so as to run from August 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>. It was reported that this would need an amendment to the Fellowship constitution. Brian Smith moved the amendment to change the dates of the financial year; Owen Murphy seconded. **AGREED nem con**

It was further reported that, because of this change, the balance sheet presented to the AGM this year showed a full year's transactions and a part year transaction (January to July). This would automatically rectify itself during the year. **NOTED**

The AGM offered a vote of thanks to Sally for her work on Fellowship finances.

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ii) **The Secretary / President Joint Report:** A written report was provide by Debbie Hollingsworth and Alan Shepherd. The main points were:

- 1) **Thanks;** were offered to Jan Smith and Peter Russell for the work they had done as President and Secretary respectively between September 2009 and April 2010.

The Secretary also thanked members of the Executive Committee, on behalf of the President and himself, for the support they had been offered as they took the Fellowship forward to the reunion/AGM. Particular thanks to Bob Anderton, Art Wright, Angela Potts and the late Bob Matthews for their help. **NOTED**

- 2) **Executive members for the year:** The AGM considered the part of the report that listed Executive Committee members for the year and associated statistics related to average attendances. Brian Smith stated that he had experienced significant difficulties with travelling to meetings because of public transport arrangements where he lived. He said this was not likely to improve in the future. **NOTED**

- 3) **Minutes of the AGM:** It was *proposed* that the minutes of the AGM be circulated to those Fellowship members who attended the AGM, after the first Executive meeting of the year. This was **agreed** with two provisos:
  - That the minutes be marked as 'Draft' so that they could be formally approved at the following AGM
  - That a principle of sending the minutes out via email where this was appropriate should be established. This would make storage and retrieval easier and would be more cost effective for the Fellowship. Where members did not have email, hard copies would be circulated. **AGREED**

- 4) **Equal Opportunities:** It was *proposed* that the Deputy President's role be extended to enable the person elected to *advise* the Fellowship on equal opportunity issues. This would include such things as issues of ethnic minority 'balance' on the Executive, investigating why so few members attended the reunion / AGM, avoiding organising meetings on dates that excluded members and taking account of the information needs of older members who find it difficult to travel to meetings. **AGREED**

- 5) **Motion from the Executive Committee:** "That the President's tenure of office be increased from a maximum of two years to a maximum of five years to enable the President to give better service to the Fellowship. The President would, however, have to be re-affirmed as President at each AGM." It was proposed that, whilst the meaning of the motion need not be changed, it should be made clear that the President was elected for one year and could be re-elected up to five times in five years. With this clarification the motion was agreed. **AGREED**

- 6) **Disputes procedure:** It was proposed that a Disputes Procedure be established to guide the President where a dispute between members may arise. Members present suggested that reference to the ACAS code of practice should be made in preparing a draft for consideration. The proposal was agreed. **AGREED**

- 7) **Fund raising for the College:** Members were advised that, should they know any appropriate sources of funding for the College, they should inform the Principal or the Secretary of the Fellowship. The College would then pursue any appropriate leads. **NOTED**

- 8) **Publicity and the College:** It was reported that the Fellowship had helped publicise College courses over the past year by making College publicity available in libraries and other organisations in Kensington and Chelsea, Banbury and in several places throughout the West Midlands. Members were invited to become involved in distributing College publicity in their respective ‘home’ areas. **NOTED**
- 9) **Training Pack:** It was reported that a Training Pack for Executive members had been written during the year. **NOTED**
- 10) **Working Agreement:** It was reported that a Working Agreement between the Fellowship and the College had been established during the year. **NOTED**

The AGM thanked the Secretary for presenting the Joint Report

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iii) **The Membership Secretary’s Report:** The Membership Secretary was not able to attend the AGM due to other important commitments. She had sent her apologies and had provided a written report that was considered by the AGM. The Secretary presented the report on behalf of the Membership Secretary. There was a lot of very useful information contained in the report. However there were three issues that required attention:

- 1) **Individual membership issues (item 3):** It was reported that the Fellowship needed a policy on who should decide if membership applications were appropriate. It was *proposed* that this be referred to the Executive Committee for action. **AGREED**
- 2) **Recruitment during the year (item 6):** It was reported that “the current rate of applications will not support Fellowship activities into the future.” It was felt that this was the most important single issue facing the Fellowship. Various views were expressed by members present including:
- The importance of finding out why people were not joining and / or participating
  - The need to have accurate information on the location of ex students
  - A claim that the College was not supporting the work of the Fellowship
  - A report that the RSU was not running effectively, or at all, and had not responded positively to overtures over the last two years
  - The need to let the students know that the Fellowship offers support to them
  - The possibility of using Friends Re-united to generate contact with ex-students.

The Chair *proposed* that the AGM refer these issues back to the Executive Committee to address and take action on over the coming year. The AGM asked that these issues be prioritised in the work of the Executive. **AGREED**

3) **Absent Friends:** The President announced the deaths of four Fellowship comrades: Mike Convery (1994-95); Myrtle Risborough (1947-49) and Hugh Gallagher (1963-65). Bob Matthews (1966-68). The Fellowship stood in silent respect in memory of the four Comrades.

The AGM thanked Carole Orgell-Rosen for her report and for the work she had done as Membership Secretary over the last two years.

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iv) **The Newsletter Co-Editor’ Report:** No report was available. The Secretary reported on the need to elect to this post at the elections later in the meeting. **NOTED**

- v) **College Council Representatives' Report:** A written report was provided from Carole Orgell-Rosen. The report focussed largely on the 'Capital Project' and the importance of financing the loan for the re-development of the Headington Campus. Carole says in her report that "the next two years will be, perhaps, the most difficult the College has ever faced."

The AGM thanked Carole for her report.

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## 6. **Discussion on the proposed changes to the Fellowship Constitution**

The Chair introduced the debate by saying that all members had available to them the current constitution, the proposed new constitution and a summary and comparison of both.

The AGM used the hour's timed business to discuss a variety of points related to the proposed exclusion of college staff, students and ordinary Executive members from membership of the Executive. There was also a discussion on the proposed method of postal voting for Executive members. Concerns were also expressed about the balance between life vice presidents and elected members.

The AGM moved to the vote. The requirement was for a two thirds majority in favour of the new proposals. There were 25 people in the room at the time of the vote. 11 people voted in favour of the proposals. This constituted 44% in favour. The proposed constitution was not, therefore, adopted.

The AGM asked that the Fellowship Executive take into account the points raised in the discussion and bring a new set of proposals to the AGM in 2011. Until that time the current constitution would continue to operate. **AGREED**

### **The Chair called for a short break before moving to the next item.**

Before the next item on the agenda was addressed Jan Smith announced that she was resigning as a Life Vice President. She left the meeting at this stage.

The AGM asked the Secretary to contact Jan and ask her to re-consider her resignation.

## 7. **Elections for the year 2010 / 2011**

### i. **Officers**

**President:** Debbie Hollingsworth – moved Brian Smith, seconded Owen Murphy. All members present in favour with one abstention

**Deputy President:** John Hurlston – moved Art Wright, seconded Angela Potts. All members present in favour with one abstention. (nb: It was agreed that Brian Smith would substitute for John as Deputy President when necessary).

**Secretary:** Alan Shepherd – moved by Owen Murphy, seconded by Frank Simkins. All members present in favour with one abstention.

**Treasurer:** Sally Courtney – moved by Roger Sealey, seconded by Alan Shepherd. All members present in favour.

**Internal Auditor:** Bob Anderton – moved by Roger Sealey, seconded by Alan Shepherd. All members present in favour, with two abstentions.

**Membership Secretary:** Elcena Jeffers – moved Owen Murphy, seconded Brian Smith. All members present in favour with one abstention.

**Newsletter Co-Editor:** Art Wright – moved by John Hurlston, seconded by Alan Shepherd. All members in favour.

- ii. **College Council Representatives (3):** It was agreed that the President should be one of the representatives on the Council. Debbie Hollingsworth elected nem con. There were three candidates for the remaining two places. The candidates and the votes they polled are shown below

	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Seconded</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Bob Anderton:	OMurphy	B Smith	14
Pauline Hamilton	O Murphy	B Smith	11
Carole Orgell-Rosen	A Wright	A Shepherd	9

Bob Anderton and Pauline Hamilton were duly elected and, with Debbie Hollingsworth, would be Fellowship representatives on the College Council for the coming year.

The AGM discussed the results of this election and it was stated that, although the Fellowship did *not* elect to the Governing Executive of the College, Carole Orgell-Rosen was a member of that Committee in a personal capacity. Whilst the AGM had decided to change the Fellowship representation on the Council, it did not want this change to have a detrimental impact on the Governing Executive. The AGM therefore asked the Secretary to discuss with the College the possibility of the Search Committee co-opting Carole to the Council as an independent representative. It was stated that, if this was possible, Carole could continue her work on the Governing Executive. **AGREED**

- iii) **Members** (Maximum 11 members elected at the AGM): Five members were nominated or volunteered. They were:
- Roger Dyas-Elliott
  - Richard Maher
  - Frank Simkins
  - Roger Sealey
  - John Kimberley (nb: John had sent his apologies to the secretary prior to the meeting but said that he would like to join the Fellowship Executive. The AGM accepted John's nomination)

All five members were elected.

8. **Motions:** This item enabled a general discussion on the activities that the AGM wanted the Executive Committee to organise during the year. The discussion embraced some of the actions identified earlier in these minutes:
1. **Constitutional Review:** To bring to the 2011 AGM a proposed new constitution that takes into account the discussion held at the 2010 AGM and that is aimed at meeting the needs of the Fellowship in the future.
  2. **The Fellowship Database:** To clarify the position with regard to access to the database and other College records relating to the Fellowship.
  3. **The Oxford Local Group:** To support the development and running of this group as necessary and appropriate. (Convenor Stan Young)
  4. **To develop a calendar for 2012:** To agree with the College arrangements for the joint development of a Ruskin calendar to mark the opening of the "new Ruskin" at Headington in 2012.
  5. **Reasons for *not* attending the Reunion/ AGM:** To research the reasons why members do not attend the reunion/AGM weekend by contacting 60 members with a questionnaire .

6. **Fellowship Fees:** To review Fellowship fees with a view to possible increases. To provide recommendations to the AGM in 2011.
7. **Archiving Fellowship Documents:** To establish a Fellowship archive. To provide storage facilities for the safekeeping of documents. To develop such activities as are necessary to gather and record 'the Ruskin experience' of Fellowship members and the impact the experience has had on their lives. (To co-opt Rosemary to the Executive as Fellowship archivist).
8. **Supporting the Ruskin Students Union:** To offer unconditional support to the RSU, the nature of which will be dependent on its organisational needs.
9. **Tracking Fellowship Members:** To develop tracking arrangements for Fellowship members. (This can be linked to 2 above).
10. **Facilities for the Fellowship President:** To seek access to a computer for the President at the College.

**The activities were AGREED**

9. **Date of the first Executive Committee Meeting of the year:** It was agreed that the date be Saturday 13 November 2010 between 2pm and 5pm at Walton Street.
10. **Date of 2011 AGM:** Date to be agreed.
11. **Any Other Business:**
  - i. Brian Smith informed the AGM that the Voluntary Bureau in Elizabeth Street, Corby provided facilities for organising Ruskin events in that area. It was agreed that this information be raised with the College. **AGREED**
  - ii. Roger Dyas – Elliott advised the meeting that Alan Miel, the MP for Mansfield, may have information regarding the history of the Fellowship. It was agreed that Alan be contacted. **AGREED**
  - iii) Stan Young reported that the first meeting of the Fellowship Oxford local group would take place at the College on Monday October 4<sup>th</sup>. He confirmed that the College had sent out letters to potential participants. Stan said he felt that it would probably take a second meeting to make an informed judgement about whether such a group was viable. The AGM fully supported the establishment of this group. **NOTED**
  - iv) Stan also reported that there were proposals for the development of a Ruskin calendar aimed at a 2012 launch. It was agreed that Stan keep the Secretary informed of developments. **AGREED**
  - v) The AGM re-affirmed that they would like the issue of the member who arrived at the College but could not gain access because of the absence of a wheelchair to be taken up with the College. **AGREED**
  - vi) Own Murphy thanked, and congratulated, the Chair and Secretary on behalf of the meeting, on running a businesslike and purposeful AGM.

12. There being no further business the meeting closed at 1:15 pm

Signed Fellowship President . . . . .  
 Date . . . . .