

FRIENDS' SCHOOL LISBURN

Founded 1774



OLD SCHOLARS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Old Scholars' Association held at Friends' School Lisburn on Friday 10 May 2019

PRESENT: Donald Patterson, Mary Donnelly, John Stanage, Christopher Clark, Arthur Chapman, David Trotter, Holly Poots, Stephen Moore, Liz Palmer, Maxine Boyd, Gerald Crawford, Mary Crawford, Rosemary Houston, Joan Maxwell, Denis Wilson, Eleanor McFadzean .

APOLOGIES: Brian Mairs, Aidan Pearson.

1 WELCOME

Donald opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present. He thanked pupils Brian, Lauren, Sophie and Natasha for playing for us upon arrival on the Oboe, guitar, Violin and Flute.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

These were circulated and agreed as an accurate record.

3 REPORTS

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

- This is my last task as President of the Association and it has been an honour to serve for the past 12 months in this capacity.
- I must thank all the committee members who have attended the meetings throughout the year and endeavored to attract new members and arrange events to interest members. Thanks to Maxine for continuing the thankless task of Secretary and Sarah, Ashley and Holly for keeping the Facebook page updated.
- Thanks must also go to Joanne and the staff in the school office who help us so much, especially at the time of year when the school magazine is being printed and sent out for which John Stanage deserves a special mention in compiling so much of the OS section.
- We started after last years AGM to discuss how we could get more members along to this and other meetings. In the past, the formats were different but numbers declined for various reasons and we did not think that going back to the former ways would draw more members.
- However, we continue to keep this under review.
- As President I attended the Prep school P1 Sports Day in June, the School Speech Day in September, presented rowing machines to the school for use in the well equipped gymnasium in October and Arthur Chapman and myself had the privilege of visiting an ex President, Gladys Pullen on the day before her 100th birthday on the 1 November 2018.
- The first event on my watch was the Golf Outing June last year. We had a few more golfers attending including a ladies' team.

- In September we had another successful Careers Evening in conjunction with the Careers Department in the school, when Old Scholars from different career backgrounds came and shared their experiences with those about to leave school. It was a very worthwhile event.
- President's Dinner, arranged for November, had to be cancelled as so few replied.
- We opened the Archive Room again one afternoon and those attending found the vast amount of material interesting. Thanks must go again to Arthur Chapman who has been tireless in promoting the contents of this room.
- We helped in the distribution of 353 school Magazines.
- In January we held a First Aid Evening in February when a Red Cross member addressed us. This proved to be both helpful and interesting to those who attended.
- The Table Quiz was Thursday 9 May 2019. About 35/40 people attended. Numbers were down on previous years. Individuals and businesses in and around the city were very generous in providing 11 prizes for the raffle. With the entrance fee we raised £370 which will probably go towards a project called Sport for All.
- Ongoing – the committee will organise the use of a legacy left by an Old Scholar, to be spent in Archive Room – planning to use some of it to have a few valuable books rebound. They are books by the first headmaster almost 250 years ago, John Gough.
- I finish my year as President with the same problem with which I started – the disappointment in numbers attending events. We had tried to get two more evenings arranged with very well-known past pupils but getting the individuals proved impossible this time round because of busy schedules in one case and illness in another. We will continue to try to arrange for these events in the future. events, which should attract a lot of members.
- Again, thanks must go to all those I mentioned at the start and I want to wish our incoming President, Stephen Moore every success for the year ahead. We recognize that he is a very busy man but we have encouraged him to delegate to other committee members some of the workload.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

- Maxine thanked all those who took the time and trouble to attend the AGM. At the risk of repetition, she referred to the perennial problem of drumming up interest and enthusiasm from OS members for the events the committee try to arrange.
- The annual table quiz, which last year had been a great success, had been held earlier in the week and whilst not as financially successful as last year, it was nonetheless a very enjoyable evening and worth repeating. £370 was raised this year.
- Mention was made of the legacy made by our late committee member Kathleen Ferguson. It had been decided that the monies should be spent restoring some of the very valuable books in the Archive Room. Mr Chapman who continues to tend to the Archive had kindly brought along a few examples of such publication for the assembled to peruse. He continues to expertly curate the great wealth of information therein. He will be glad of the help offered by Mary Hewitt who has kindly agreed to both help in the Archive Room and join the committee!
- The magazine was available in January of this year. Thanks must go to the committee members who take the time and trouble to help save on postage costs by hand delivering many copies. We are still "tweaking" the distribution list and hope to further reduce wasted copies without disappointing those who still wish to receive one.
- Thanks as ever go to Joanne for her invaluable help "keeping me right" and to Braid and her team for the tea and scones provided today.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Unfortunately Brian is recovering from an operation and couldn't be with us. However, the accounts and financial reports were provided to the meeting and are attached herewith.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- Stephen stated how pleased he was to see so many people gathered and welcomed them all back to the school.
- In his new capacity as incoming President of the Association he is, more than ever, keen to continue to foster links between the school and its Old Scholars, especially in the years coming up to the 250th anniversary of the founding of the school in 2024.
- The great success of the recent reunions of the classes of '76, '77, '78 and '79 confirmed the positive mark that an education at FSL had left on so many lives.
- He welcomed not only the sense of community that the Association helped to maintain by its contribution to the life of the school, but also the financial contributions made over the years, especially in light of the huge cutbacks in budget that the school faces each year. This year alone three members of staff are being lost and not replaced.
- In spite of this however, the pupils continue to produce admirable GCSE and A level results and thus the school remains firmly at the top of the league tables.
- On the sporting field, trophies continue to be won and the younger teams coming through show much promise.
- Musically, the school Christmas Concert is a wonderful event and the Spring Concert is now in its fourth year.
- The connections with the Quaker community are as strong as ever with many of the young people becoming involved with Quaker Cottage and Quaker Service.
- School life continues to be busy and he hopes that the Old Scholars can feel a part of it all.

4 OFFICE BEARERS

The make up of the committee is attached. It was agreed that once again, given the poor turnout, nominations would be taken as read. No objections to those proposed were voiced from the floor.

5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

6 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Annual General Meeting of the Old Scholars' Association will be held in May/June 2020 – to be confirmed.