



Friends of American Old Time Music and Dance
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held at Queen Elizabeth's High School, Gainsborough, Lincs
on Sunday 16th February 2020 at 10 am

Committee present:

Chairman – Alan Pridgeon

Treasurer – Andrew Cocks

Assistant Treasurer – Martin Seamark

Secretary – Sue Rooke

Festival Organizer – Tim Rooke

Events Organizer – Tony Mear

Dance Representative – Clare Sheridan

Old Time News Deputy Editor - Judy Spindler

Webmaster – Tim Mason

Apologies: Steve Wise – Magazine Editor
Eve Morris – Membership Secretary

35 Members present: Ray Banks, Peter Budd, Liz Mars, Maureen Pridgeon, Alan Spindler, Stuart Hedley, John Rushton, Glenys Petz, Paul Sheridan, Liam Kirby, Jo Wright, Olly Davey, Tony Scola, Diane Carr, Jimmy Carr, Val Fovargue, Chas Fovargue, Anthony Mee, Peter Grist, Sue Hancox, Ozzie Jewel, William James Duddy, Graham Luetchford, Hugh Connor, Joan Abbott, David Dry, Michi Mathias, Paul Hawkey, Judy Roberts, Sara Rose, Paul Fundak, Mandy Emerson, Annie Warner, Paul Warner, Jane Lewis.

Apologies: Nick Pilley & Claire Rudd

Minutes taken by Sue Rooke

1. Minutes of last Meeting

Last year's minutes were distributed and accepted as an accurate record of the previous AGM held on Sunday 17th Feb 2019.

2. Matters arising

There were no matters arising that would not be discussed during the meeting.

3. Committee Members' Reports

Andrew Cocks – Treasurer's Report

Andrew produced a Financial Report up to 31st December 2019 and this was distributed. He stated that the financial position of Foatmad remained stable and had made a surplus of almost £1,000 overall for the year. The cash position stood at £26,000, which was inflated by sales of early bird tickets to the festival. It was suggested that we put more into the deposit account and it is something that would be considered. Sponsorship from Acme has been pledged again for 2020.

Eve Morris - Membership Secretary's Report

As Eve was not present, Andrew Cocks read out her report. Membership stands at 436, which includes 3 complimentary, and has increased by 16 since February 2019. Some complications had been experienced when members were forgetting to increase their fees when renewing. GoCardless takes about 10 days to process and this caused some overlap when people were joining to take advantage of the early bird festival tickets. The benefit of GoCardless is that if, and when the membership is increased, we can adjust the amount, and they remind everyone about 1 week before their renewal date.

Clare Sheridan – Dance Representative's Report

Clare reported that the dance parties this year had been successful. Sara Rose is organizing one in March in Derby and there may be one later in the year in Pembrokeshire run by Jackie Kempston. There had been dance workshops at the Foatmad camps and these would continue this year. She was pleased to see dancers included in the concerts.

Tim Rooke – Festival Organizer's Report

Tim thought the festival was going well and there had been 218 tickets sold. The decision to extend it to the Monday again had been well received. It had been decided that all non-members who purchased the weekend ticket could receive a free year's membership if they wished. This year Foatmad had rented chairs for the concert hall and this had been welcomed by all and Tim thought it encouraged more people to stay in the concerts. He asked people to fill in feedback forms as they were very informative and useful. The Scratch Band Competition continued to get a good response and 7 bands took part. Someone asked if the winning band could do a short performance on stage as an incentive, Tim said he would consider that for next year.

David Payne, an old member, had recorded and donated a large number of DVD's of old-time music, video and tablature from his collection for members to take and Tim was encouraging them to make a donation to charity. He had put out a collecting box for Hannah Skelson's fund raising cause for "Marie Curie".

Judy Spindler – Old Time News Magazine - Deputy Editor's Report

Judy reported that she and Steve Wise had been working together and were on the look-out for more articles and advertisers. She thought they could do with more dance content and asked Clare to send details in advance of the deadlines. 32 UK members had sent in articles this year and there was a draw for free membership for one year. This was won by Stuart Wade. Judy thanked Jane Lewis who had been asked to be official photographer this year. Someone enquired as to whether there could be a classified ad section and Judy said that this was available, and members could send in small adverts for free. Tim Mason reported that this was not available on the website at the present time.

Tony Mear – Events Organizer's Report

Tony reported that although the November workshops were slow to be taken up this year, they made a small surplus. They took place at a new venue in Knighton, Powys, which offered more accommodation options and those who attended really liked it. There were also options to attend just to go to the sessions, which several did. The venue has been provisionally booked for 2020 for the same weekend. The workshops don't generally seem to be as popular as they used to be and there would be meetings to discuss other options and to look at the results of the recent survey carried out and what members want. Andrew Cocks is taking over from Tony this year as Events Organizer. He has aspirations for the future camps to encourage up and coming bands to appear on stage, to have more workshops at the camps, and would be able to use the sponsorship money we received to do this to help spread the word. A question was asked about what communication channels we use to publicize events. Tony said we mainly use the website, the magazine, the blog and facebook, but we would look at doing more in the future. The Facebook page was not an official publicity route as at the present time it doesn't belong to Foatmad but operates through Tony Mear and Nick Pilley.

Tim Mason – Webmaster's Report

Tim reported that the website has been up and running for 15 months and it was just a question of keeping it up to date with session dates, annual workshops, the festival and information on the Spring and Summer camps. The

main changes this year had been installing the GoCardless facility to save on fee charges. There had been some issues with some emails not getting to the right person, and there was a lot of spam. These problems will be looked at. Andrew Cocks said he would like to see on the website is a list of all UK old-time bands and dance bands.

Alan Pridgeon - Chairman's Report

Alan reported that some of the sponsorship money received from Acme had been spent on a barn dance band for Crossover. After several applications, Foatmad had received an Arts Council Grant for £2,000 but if you make a profit, they may ask for it back. Some of it paid for the chair rental this year.

The question of whether to appoint a new President was still under review, following the death of Tom Paley. At the present time there wasn't enough support to appoint one.

The workshop survey results will be publicized shortly but picking weekends would appear to be a popular choice and the Midlands the preferred area.

It had been decided by the committee to award Eve Morris with a Lifetime Membership Award in recognition of her work on the committee for the last 25 years plus. As she was not here this weekend, flowers and a certificate were being sent to her.

Alan has organized for the Foatmad CD's (Hands Across the Pond and Ripples Across the Pond) to be available to download on Bandcamp.

Alan thanked Tony Mear for all his hard work as Events Organizer over the years.

5. Retirement of Present Committee

Tony Mear resigned as Events Organizer, Martin Seamark was elected to take over the role as Treasurer and this was proposed by Jane Lewis and seconded by Ozzie Jewel and Sue Hancox. All the other committee members indicated their willingness to continue to serve and were re-elected.

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6. Any other business

There will be some changes this year at Summer Camp at Croft Farm. Spring Camp will remain unchanged but for the Summer Camp we will be using a field further down the site towards the river. There will be a Big Top tent for our use, and we will be able to have the campfires. Electric hook up will still be available. The fees will be held. One member said she had found out that although the official time to get on site is 2pm, if you want to get on earlier you can pay an extra £5 to do so if the pitches are available.

There was a discussion about first timers to the festival and less experienced players, and how we can make it less daunting to join in sessions and make all feel welcome. We would look at having a meet-up room and open-door sessions that encourage all levels to join in. Another possibility was to have a few mentors who would be happy to chat and play with folk who are new to the festival and old-time music.

The meeting closed at 11.11am.