

DEAL/SAINT OMER TWINNING SOCIETY

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held Wednesday 8 March 2023

Present: Sue Couchman (Chairman), Cllr Chris Turner, Barry Baxter and Carol Kewley, Sue and Chris Borley, Barbara and Brian Brown, Ros Bundy, Ernie Couchman, John Cross, Christine and Grenville Everard, Norma and Bob Gee, Veronica Gibson, Christine Hall, David and Sandra Hall, Anita and Peter Lamb, Julie and Duncan McKenzie, Jenny Noake, Paul and Jackie Robbins, Eileen Rowbotham, Margaret Stone, Gary and Joanne Strouts, Chris Tough and Susan O'Mahoney, Deborah Turner, Joy Visagie

Chairman's Opening Remarks

Sue welcomed everyone to the meeting and mentioned that copies of the minutes of last year's AGM and of this year's accounts had been left on the tables for members' information.

Apologies

Apologies had been received from Christine Bruce, Marlene Burnham, Alan and Christine Clark, Mike and Eyvor Fogarty, Roger and Sheila Gray, Sheila and John Harris, John and Jill Kirby, Jean Methven, Brenda Munday, Valerie Nadin, Graham and Linda Pearce, David Rowbotham, John and Gloria Voller, Don Wade

Previous Minutes

The minutes of last year's AGM, held on Wednesday 23 March 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters Arising

None.

Chairman's Report

Sue delivered her report on the past year – reproduced below:

I AM VERY PLEASED THAT THIS YEAR I CAN REPORT THAT WE HAVE NOT HAD TO MISS ANY MEETINGS OR FUNCTIONS DUE TO COVID. THE MONTHLY MEETINGS HERE AT THE TOWN HALL HAVE SEEN SOME VERY INTERESTING SPEAKERS AND ENTERTAINMENT BUT ALAS HAVE NOT ALWAYS BEEN WELL ATTENDED BY THE MEMBERSHIP, I AM SURE SOME OF THIS HAS BEEN DOWN TO THE FACT THAT COVID HAS NOT DISAPPEARED AND RAISES CONCERNS WHEN MEETING WITH OTHER PEOPLE AT A TIME WHEN INFECTION RATES WERE ON THE INCREASE.

WE HAVE MANAGED TO VARY OUR MEETINGS OVER THE LAST YEAR WITH A MIX OF SPEAKERS AND MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT, IN SEPTEMBER WE COMBINED OUR MONTHLY MEETING WITH THE FIRST SAINT OMER/DEAL GOLF EVENT HELD HERE AT WALMER & KINGSDOWN GOLF CLUB, FOR THE

FIRST TIME SINCE COVID WE WERE ABLE TO MEET UP WITH SOME OF OUR FRIENDS FROM FRANCE AND WHILE THE GOLF TOOK PLACE A GROUP OF US VENTURED INTO DEAL TRYING OUT OUR NEW CRAZY GOLF COURSE ON THE STRAND FOLLOWED BY AN INVITATION FROM OUR MAYOR FOR TEA HERE AT THE TOWN HALL. CLL CHRIS TURNER, OUR MAYOR AND CLL SUE BEER, DEPUTY MAYOR, WERE BOTH IN ATTENDENCE ALONG WITH THE TOWN CLERK WHO GAVE US A VERY INTERESTING TALK ON THE VARIOUS ROBES USED OVER THE YEARS BY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES. THE EVENING EVENT AT THE GOLF CLUB INCLUDED A VERY NICE MEAL AND FOLLOWED WITH PRESENTATIONS TO ALL THE GOLFERS WITH MEDELS PROVIDED AND PRESENTED BY OUR MAYOR. THE WHOLE DAY WAS A BIG SUCCESS AND THE FRENCH GOLFERS WANT A RETURN MATCH IN SAINT OMER THIS YEAR (FURTHER DETAILS ON THIS EVENT WILL FOLLOW IN DUE COURSE).

AS TRAVELING TO FRANCE ON A COACH WAS STILL QUITE AN ORDEAL TO ORGANISE AND THE LACK OF SUPPORT FROM THE MEMBERSHIP FOR A UK TRIP WE DID NOT UNDERTAKE ANY COACH VISITS DURING THE YEAR. IT IS HOPED THAT THIS YEAR WE MAY BE ABLE TO DO AT LEAST ONE TRIP AND AGAIN DETAILS ON THIS WILL FOLLOW.

ONCE AGAIN, THIS YEAR WE HELD OUR CHRISTMAS QUIZ AT THE GOLF CLUB THIS WAS WELL ATTENDED AND AN EXCELLENT EVENING. WE ROUNDED OFF THE YEAR WITH A DINNER AT THE COURT YARD IN FEBRUARY, I REMEMBER AS A NEW MEMBER OF TWINNING, WE USED TO HAVE AN ANNUAL DINNER BUT THIS HAD STOPPED SOME YEARS AGO SO I WANTED TO SEE IF WE COULD REINSTATE THIS FROM 2023, IT WAS A GOOD EVENING WITH GOOD FOOD AND COMPANY.

I UNDERSTAND THAT A GROUP FROM SAINT OMER TO INCLUDE THEIR MAYOR WILL BE VISITING DEAL VERY SHORTLY WITH A VIEW TO DISCUSS FUTURE TWINNING EVENTS BETWEEN OUR 2 TOWNS I WILL OFCOURSE KEEP YOU POSTED WITH THE OUTCOME OF THIS VISIT WITH THE HOPE THAT A TWINNING EVENT CAN TAKE PLACE THIS YEAR WHETHR HERE IN DEAL OR IN SAINT OMER.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THIS NEW YEAR I HOPE WE WILL BE ABLE TO COMPLETE A FULL PROGRAM OF EVENTS AND ONCE AGAIN, I MUST APOLOGISE TO YOU ALL FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO GIVE YOU THE USUAL PROGRAM CARD AT THIS MEETING, BUT WE ARE HAVING TO WAIT FOR THE COUNCIL TO CONFIRM THE DATES OF THE MEETINGS WE WISH TO HOLD HERE AT THE TOWN HALL, ONCE THIS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE YOU WILL ALL GET A FULL YEARS PROGRAM OF EVENTS.

I HOPE TO OFFER OUR MEMBERSHIP A GOOD VARIETY OF EVENTS OVER THE NEXT YEAR SOME OF WHICH I HAVE AREADY MENTIONED ABOVE BUT ALL OF THESE CAN ONLY TAKE PLACE IF YOU THE MEMBERS SUPPORT THEM SO PLEASE TRY YOUR BEST TO COME ALONG WHENEVER YOU CAN AND IF YOU HAVE FRIENDS OR RELATIVES WHO WOULD ALSO LIKE TO JOIN US THEN PLEASE CONTACT EITHER MYSELF OR ANY OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO SORT OUT THEIR MEMBERSHIP. THE COST OF THE MEMBERSHIP REMAINS AT

£10.00 AND THE MONTHLY MEETINGS AT THE TOWN HALL TO INCLUDE LIGHT REFRESHMENTS REMAINS AT £5.00, SO I THINK YOU WOULD ALL AGREE THIS IS GREAT VALUE FOR MONEY ESPECIALLY IN THE CURRENT FINANCIAL CLIMATE.

I WOULD NOW LIKE TO THANK THE COMMITTEE FOR ALL THEIR HELP OVER THE LAST YEAR, ALAN CLARKE FOR HIS WORK AS SECRETARY WHO SADLY HAD TO GIVE UP THE POST A FEW MONTHS AGO AND WILL BE GREATLY MISSED, CHRISTINE BRUCE OUR TREASURER, JOY VISAGIE FOR ALL THE GREAT SPEAKERS SHE FINDS AND THE RAFFLES SHE ORGANISES FOR US (WHICH I HAVE TO SAY HELPS BOOST OUR FINANCES GREATLY), CHRISTINE HALL FOR ARRANGING CATERING, DON WADE FOR KEEPING YOU ALL INFORMED WITH HIS NEWSLETTERS AND RECENTLY HELPING OUT WITH SECRETIAL DUTIES , JENNY NOAKES WHO HAS COME ON BOARD TO HELP WITH CATERING AND WE ALSO HAVE NON COMMITTEE MEMBER JOHN HARRIS WHO IS WORKING HARD ON OUR WEB SITE AND IF ANY OF YOU HAVE ANYTHING, INCLUDING PHOTOGRAPHS, YOU WOULD LIKE TO POST ON OUR SITE, JOHN WOULD BE VERY PLEASED TO HEAR FROM YOU, THEN LAST BUT NOT LEAST, MY HUSBAND ERNIE, WHO RUNS AROUND ON MY BEHALF AND STANDS IN FOR OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHEN NECESSARY, **BUT AS I SAID LAST YEAR THE BIGGEST THANK YOU HAS TO GO TO YOU THE MEMBERS, WITHOUT YOU THIS SOCIETY WOULD NOT EXIST AND UNLIKE MANY OTHER ORGANISATIONS WE SEEM TO HAVE A STRONG MEMBERSHIP SO MANY MANY THANKS TO YOU ALL.**

I DO HOPE THAT THE NEXT YEAR WILL BE BETTER THAN THE LAST, WITH SO MANY DREADFUL PROBLEMS IN OUR WORLD SOMETHING LIKE OUR SMALL SOCIETY CAN BRING SOME LIGHT RELIEF WHEN ALL SEEMS SO UNCERTAIN AROUND US.

SO PLEASE ALL KEEP SAFE AND WELL

MANY THANKS

Treasurer's Report

Copies of the accounts were provided, but it was pointed out that it had not been able to verify the bank balance as an up to date bank statement was awaited. This would be completed on the return of the Treasurer and the availability of the bank statement

Election of Officers, Committee,

Sue Couchman was re-elected unopposed to serve as Chairman for the coming year.

Chris Tough was elected unopposed to serve as Secretary, proposed by Susan O'Mahoney and seconded by Sue Couchman; Christine Bruce was re-elected to serve as Treasurer on a temporary basis, proposed by Christine Everard and seconded by Paul Robbins; all other Committee members were re-elected on a show of hands.

Appointment of Member to Verify Accounts

Ernie Couchman was appointed as the member to verify the accounts for 2023/24– proposed by Christine Everard, seconded by Paul Robbins.

Any Other Business

None

Next Meeting

Subject to the Council confirming availability of the premises, the next AGM was provisionally arranged for Wednesday 20th March 2024.