

Minutes of The Milton Abbey Association AGM

1230, Saturday 11 June 2016

Kings' Room , Milton Abbey

The meeting was chaired by Paul Harrison

Attendees:

Paul Harrison, Simon Smail, Paul Nicholson, Alex Wakeley, Matthew Noyce, Magnus Bashaarat, Josh Bradbury, Hugo Mieville

Apologies were received from:

Jeremy Harrison Porter, Olivia Bloom Davis, Reginald Arkhurst, Izzy Wintour; Mike Sale; James Hook and Toby Edwards-Lunn (who both wished to resign from the Committee)

(Before the meeting proper began, Hugo Mieville introduced Elisia Bird, the recipient of the 2016-17 MAA GapYear Award. Elisia gave a short but compelling account to the Committee of her plans to travel to Hong Kong during her Gap Year, where she would be working in the community with Christian street pastors, whilst staying with a local family.)

1. Welcome by President Paul Harrison, chairing the meeting:

Paul thanked Elisia, and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that the purpose of the meeting was to look back at the activities of the previous year, and to look forward to those activities of the coming year which would fulfil the aims of the association. These are to encourage contact between members; to foster contact between the school and the MAA; to be in the business of 'friend- raising' incorporating the different groups of supporters of the school; to extend the careers- and work-related aspects of the MAA's activities with former and current pupils; to extend sporting activities and links, and to communicate with members by various technological means. He asked, and was granted, permission to record the meeting for the purpose of minute-writing.

2. Apologies were read (see above.)

3. Minutes of the AGM on Sunday 7th June 2015: These were approved: this was proposed by Paul Nicholson, and seconded by Simon Smail,

4. Matters arising from the Minutes: Paul Nicholson stated that, to comply with charity law, the minutes should always be available in hard copy as well as soft copy, and he queried as to whether the minutes of previous meetings were available in this form. Hugo Mieville said that he would look into this. Paul also stated that the hard copy of the previous AGM should be signed by the chair of the current meeting. (This was then done for 2015.) Paul also requested that future minutes should be summaries, rather than transcripts!

5. Treasurer's report.

A summary of the report was read by Paul Nicholson on behalf of the Treasurer Malcolm Gibbs, in his absence. (Appendix 1) The Income and Expenditure Account Balance Sheet 6th April 2015-5th April 2016; and (Appendix 2) The Value of Investments 2015-16, are attached to these minutes.

Malcolm noted that there had been an increase in the Association's income caused by the levying of £30 per pupil per term by the school - he has asked for a breakdown of the total termly figure from the school but so far this has not been forthcoming. He reported that it has been agreed that half the cost of the Painter's Hall reception will be taken out of next term's levy. He noted the increase in expenditure caused by Paul Wood's expenses, caused by his valuable work on behalf of the MAA. There was a very healthy overall surplus of more than £17000. Malcolm noted that there will be an increase in expenditure caused by the fact that in future the Association will be paying half of the Administrator's salary. He does not, however, think that there will need to be any immediate increase in the membership subscription, but that this might be necessary in future years. The management of the Association's investments by Godolphin was continuing to go well, and the overall value of these was over £112,000 - compared to £75,000 a few years ago. In conclusion, the MAA's financial situation was very healthy, and he recommended the acceptance of the accounts. Paul Nicholson agreed with this recommendation.

There followed a discussion about whether there would need to be a future rise in the membership subscription(levy) to accommodate the increased In expenditure, and the point was made that the school would need a good deal of notice of this: the potential effect on parents' school bills was also noted. The earliest it could be done would be September 2017, with notice given by the MAA to the School no later than the Lent Term. Magnus Bashaarat made the point that when parents discovered how much they are getting for their money in terms of networking and careers advice, they would better see the point of the subscription. There followed a discussion about the value of The Hub, and the need to promulgate what it does more widely.

The motion to accept the Treasurer's report was proposed by Matthew Noyce and seconded by Simon Smail.

6. Headmaster's report

Magnus Bashaarat felt that, rather than reading out a very long and comprehensive report on the preceding year in the meeting, that it would be better for him to make the report available in time to be sent out with horse minutes. The report is therefore attached as (Appendix 3.)

He highlighted what a busy and successful year it had been in a multitude of different aspects of school life. He then answered a question from Paul Nicholson about the future of 'Cornborough' the school house in the grounds next to the golf course: the house is to be sold to the diocese and then re- leased back to the school. This would permit it to become to a Benedictine Oblate, as part of the scheme to re-develop the Abbey.

7. MAA Manager's report

Hugo Mieville then gave his first report as the new MAA Manager. His report is re- printed below:

I am delighted to be taking over as MAA Manager. After 31 years of teaching French here, Milton Abbey School is close to my heart. Not only have I seen generations of boys (and of course now girls) pass in and then out of the Main Arch, but I have also met most of their parents - and of course have worked with a fair few members of staff and governors during this time. And I raised my own family when living here as a housemaster. Fifteen years on the SMT (which stands for Senior Management Team, not Sandwich Making Team by the way!) have also taught me a thing or two about how the school works - not to mention something about organising events. The latter skill has come in useful in the last few years of being a parliamentary candidate and a town councillor - as has the ability to get my head down and ignore the occasional criticism which has come my way!

Before I go any further, I must praise the contribution of Paul Wood as my predecessor in this post. It is never easy to be the first in a new job, but Paul defined the role in a way which it will be difficult for me to follow. He brought hard work, intelligence, sporting prowess and humour to his new post, and above all he obviously hugely enjoyed the job. The MAA has much to thank him for, and he will be a hard act to follow.

I have no worries about being the servant of two masters. It seems to me that the interests of the school and the MAA, whilst not being identical, are intertwined: a school with a good reputation only enhances the status of its former pupils; whilst high-achieving, humane and humble former pupils can only enhance the prestige of the school.

So what have I been doing in the last seven or eight weeks since I began doing this role part-time, whilst still working as a French teacher and also trying to cope, as some of you may know, with a crisis in my family life? And what do I hope to do next year? Well, let's take this term first. I have been busy with a core activity of the role of MAA Manager: organising work-experience for this year's L6 in the forthcoming Business Week; and so far (from a pretty much standing start) Josh Bradbury and I have placed over 20 pupils with MAA members for the two days of 20-21 June (in occupations ranging from hotel management through estate agency to fund-raising for a large political party), as well as finding gainful activities for others to benefit from. The week itself is of course still to come. The same week will also see a Careers Hub over two afternoons, which will culminate in a presentation and wine-tasting from MAA member Fred Langdale.

At the same time, we have found, in Elisia Bird, someone whom I hope you will agree is a worthy recipient of the MAA Gap Year Award., and Elisia will be receiving her award on Speech Day. It would appear that recent recipients of this Award have still not been back to talk to the 'new' M6 about their experiences, and this is something I will be looking to put right next year, probably in January or February, when their experiences will give a welcome boost to our presentation, to next year's M6, about the Gap Year Scholarship scheme.

The term's sporting events have also been prominent, and a successful cricket match pitted Alex Grandy's MAA team against the School on a very cold Sunday at the start of term; whilst a few weeks later, a warmer Sunday greeted the annual golf match between a School team, captained by the Deputy Head, and an MAA team captained by James Hook, which featured an ex-professional golfer in Charlie Gold, and the scorer of a hole-in-one on the 4th hole, in Nick David!

The sports matches underlined the success of the sports captains policy, which I will be happy to continue next year. Earlier in the year, there was also a successful MAA hockey match, with the MAA team captained by Richard Dunn playing the school in the first mixed hockey match since the admission of girls into the school. It was a great success, with the score 5-2 to the Hornets.

It hasn't all been sport, of course, and members of the Committee, as well as parents, former parents, governors, former governors and other friends of Milton Abbey gathered at the Painter's Hall in March for what I believe was a very optimistic and positive evening of friend- raising. And of course members of the Committee attended the school Carol Service in December, before their winter meeting in a very festive Prince's Room.

I am, of course, very much still coming to terms with my new role, and I have had long and productive meetings with Paul Harrison and Malcolm Gibbs (who were very kind to the new boy!) and with Paul Wood and Lindsey Kelly. Lindsey has been trying to induct me into the wonders of The Hub amongst other things, of which more anon!

Looking to the future, I do intend to continue to develop the Career Pathway., with frequent visits by MAA members doing various occupations; with the work- experience programme, with more speed- dating, and with developing the networking activities. The more relevant the MAA can show itself to be to the current pupils' futures, the happier they will be to continue to support the association financially, and in other ways, when they leave the school. This Tuesday, the

Headmaster, Lindsey Kelly and I will be making a presentation to this year's leavers, to underline the value of future participation to them; to instruct them in the uses of The Hub, and to suggest ways of possible future financial support. I would also underline that the more MAA members feel that they are contributing to the lives of current pupils and leavers, the more they will feel that being part of the association is a worthwhile, as well as enjoyable, activity to be involved in. It's a two-way street.

I intend to re-introduce an Annual Dinner in London, probably in February each year, since this is a very important way of keeping in touch with other members, especially those based in the capital. This event will probably be each February. I will of course continue to encourage Year Group dinners, such as the one being organised by Malcolm White and Nigel Haddon- Paton in London on Saturday 24 September.

I will also continue to develop the sporting links, of course, as they provide another layer of cement to the bonds between former pupils, and between former and current pupils: another link in the chain. It does seem that the sports captains policy is working well, and that it gives a variety of different individuals a taste of responsibility, and so I would intend to continue with this. The cricket, golf, the mixed hockey matches have indeed worked well (although there was no sailing match this year due, I believe, to communication problems) - and there has recently been a demand for all- girls hockey versus the school.

I would also like to propose a slightly different schedule of our meetings, which might help to solve two different problems at one time. The first is the long time-lapse between the June meeting and the Carol Service meeting, some six months. The second is the obvious difficulty that younger actual, or potential members of the Committee, based in the London area, are having in getting to meetings at Milton Abbey, with all the demands of work, family and relationships. Therefore, I would like to propose a new pattern of quarterly meetings for next year:

Late September 2016: (venue and date tbc) London meeting

Friday 9 December 2016: Milton Abbey meeting

Wednesday 22 February 2017 (date tbc): London meeting (together with annual dinner)

Saturday 10 June 2017: Milton Abbey (AGM) meeting

This new pattern will allow London- based members to attend more meetings, and to participate more fully: this might allow a younger, more 'professional' group of members, with new ideas, to attend the meetings. (This idea received general support from the meeting, despite some reservations about increasing the number of meetings. For the September meeting this year, Alex Wakeley would be happy to organise some drinks afterwards ; Matt Noyce may be able to provide a venue.)

Given my recent political experience, the world of 'social media' holds no fears for me, and I very much intend to continue with Paul's ideas of using Twitter, Facebook and E- Bulletins - all of which are essential elements of communication in the modern world, and which so many of our members take for granted in their everyday lives.

I know that you have given considerable discussion to the production of a MAA ' honours board' to sit in the Queen's Room by the door to the Library. I have already shown these designs to Malcolm Gibbs and Paul Harrison, and have discussed them in factual detail with Simon Smail over the phone, and now present them to you for a final decision. The final cost will be around £380. Thoughts please.(There was some discussion about the factual accuracy of various details of the 'draft ' honours board, and Hugo Mievil reported the estimated price of £380 for the work to be done. However, in the end the committee decided unanimously that there was no appetite for such a board.)

Before I close, you may know that in a previous life as Senior Master, I had responsibility for updating the honours boards for Head and Deputy Head of School which are found in the cloisters, the sharper- eyed amongst you may have noticed that there is room for only one more set of

names on the Head of School board. The headmaster and I wonder whether the MAA would like to consider purchasing a new wooden board as a ' continuation sheet'. This will probably have to be sited in a new location because of the lack of space. The cost will be somewhere between £580-700 for the board, excluding lettering. It would be a question of historical continuity. Again, Hugo Mieville asked for any thoughts. (After some discussion, it was finally agreed that the funding of the board should be linked to the idea of the Heads of School participating in MAA activities; and Hugo Mieville agreed to present a more fleshed - out proposition as an agenda item at a future meeting.)

In conclusion to my comments, I am very pleased to have been asked to succeed Paul Wood as MAA Manager, and I am looking forward to the years ahead with relish. I intend to build upon Paul's considerable achievements, whilst at the same time adding a few individual touches of my own.

Thank you.

Paul Harrison thanked Hugo Mieville for his efforts so far in his new role.

8. Election of Officers - these positions were elected:

School Representative: Dr Josh Bradbury

Committee Members:

Reggie Arkhurst; Richard Dunn; Jeremy Harrison Porter; Alex Wakeley; Matthew Noyce; Izzy Wintour ; Olivja Bloom-Davis

(resignations received from David Mounde; Toby Edwards-Lunn; James Hook)

Non- elected positions:

Honorary Life President: John Burder

Honorary Life Vice Presidents: Paul Nicholson; Mike Sale; Simon Smail; Peter Traskey

President: Paul Harrison

Trustees: Paul Nicholson

(resignation as Trustee received from Aubrey Malcolm- Green)

Hon.Treasurer: Malcolm Gibbs

There being a vacancy as Trustee, it was resolved that Paul Nicholson would look into what the duties of a Trustee were, and that Hugo Mieville would then advertise the vacancy and the details to the Committee.

9. Dates of future meetings (as above) :

Late September 2016: (venue and date tbc) London meeting

Friday 9 December 2016: Milton Abbey meeting

Wednesday 22 February 2017 (date tbc) : London meeting (together with annual dinner)

Saturday 10 June 2017: Milton Abbey (AGM) meeting

10. AOB - there was none.

The meeting ended at 12.52 pm.

