

## Falmouth Civic Society

Minutes of an AGM held on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019, 6pm at the Athenaeum Club, Kimberley Place, Falmouth

1. Apologies: Bren Button, Harry Nicholls, June Ingleby-Oddy, Christopher Smith, Cliff and Sheila Brown, Shirley Clark, Gill and Barbara Fine, Sue Grigg, John and Jill Scott, Richard Shapland, David Wheeler, Veronica Whale, Paul Dodd, Liz Elvey, Sarah Hancock, Dawn Shaw, Jon and Judy May, Anne and Mike Thomas, Janis Winslade. 38 members present.
2. Minutes of the meeting of Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018 were approved and signed.
3. Matters arising: none
4. Treasurer's Report and appointment of auditor. Proposal to raise subscriptions. This proposal to raise single subscriptions to £7.50 and household subscriptions to £10 was unanimously approved.

### Finance report 2019 AGM

The accounts for 2018 have been audited by Richard Shapland and we would like to thank him once again for keeping us the straight and narrow.

The Society Funds at the end of 2017 totalled £1180.

Total receipts were £1276.

Total expenditure was £1562.

This left an account balance of £894.

Expenditure exceeded receipts by £286.

If anyone would like a copy of last year's accounts can they let me know at the end of the meeting.

Richard Shapland has kindly agreed to be auditor for the coming year.

This is the second consecutive year where expenditure has exceeded receipts. In fact, over these two years we have exceeded receipts by nearly £650.

Your committee considered where the Society might make a physical improvement to Falmouth in 2018, We mentioned last year a possible replacement barometer on the old Custom House to commemorate the pioneering meteorologist Admiral Fitzroy.

A 'flyer' describing the history of the barometer and what we have done to date has been sent. Some printed copies are available here this evening for those who haven't received a copy via email. Mike Jenks will talk further on this.

A rare opportunity arose for the purchase of an antique barometer very similar to that which was stolen from its granite housing more than 50 years ago.

The barometer costs were £1140 and these were met out of Society funds but this did place a considerable cashflow burden on our end of year balance.

To your committee, it is obvious that in order to continue to fulfil the aims of our constitution and consequent expenditure we need healthier financial reserves as a sinking fund to cover some initial costs for things such as St George and the Dragon and the Fitzroy barometer until appeals can replace initial and meet final costs.

After some debate, your committee are recommending raising the subscriptions by £2.50 per year to £7.50 for a single and £10 for joint membership. The cost of a cup of coffee. This proposal will be put to a vote shortly.

An appeal for sponsors and donations for the barometer was made in the local press before Christmas. A lady who is not even a member was the first individual sponsor. Since then we have raised £600 towards the cost of the barometer, a new secure door for the existing granite housing, installing the barometer and a plaque recognising individual and corporate sponsors.

Final costs cannot yet be confirmed but the figure from current estimates is likely to be in the region £2500.

We hope more members can support this appeal in some way, to recognise the valuable work that Britain's early meteorologist did for coastal communities including Falmouth and later Flushing.

Should you wish to contribute the ways to send your donations are given on the Barometer Flyer.

The proposal to raise the subscription was passed unanimously.

## **5. Chairman's report to 2019 AGM**

It hardly seems a year since we were here for our last AGM! Looking back over the year and the last report, I have to say that what was reported then is still ongoing.

The blue plaque to Anna Maria and Caroline Fox to go on the Poly has been manufactured, and it will be 'unveiled' on the 18<sup>th</sup> May at 11.00. There will be a brief ceremony, and I hope you will be able to come to see it. Once that is done we will be able to concentrate on the next one which we have proposed will be to the artist Sophie Anderson.

The replacement for the stolen FitzRoy barometer is underway. We have obtained an antique one that is very similar to the one that was stolen. We are now seeking donations and sponsorship, and you may have picked up a leaflet explaining what we hope to achieve. We are in discussion with Pendennis about making a vandal-proof and secure housing – we have a meeting with them in April. Moving the granite housing to where it belongs on the face of the old Custom House is still to be negotiated.

We have been involved in the litter-picks around town, and also in the restoration of the Markey mural behind the Tesco building – our Society is named on the plaque!

As to Falmouth's neighbourhood plan, I can now hardly mention it in polite society. It should have been in place last year. However it is still stuck with ever increasingly high hurdles being placed in the way, and unreasonable demands being made by Historic England and Natural England. It should go to Cornwall Council in the next month for 6 weeks screening and consultation, and then to the Inspector, and if OK then to referendum. By our next AGM we should be celebrating its implementation.

But even now there are positive things we can do and that can contribute to the plan. The first is proposals we can make for protecting unlisted heritage assets – that is a form of Local Listing. Have a look at the website and under 'evidence' there is a local listing report that is a starting point – hopefully you will be able to help put forward buildings and places you think should be added to the list. And now we have had an offer from one of our members Sheila Gowers to do a similar thing for the protections of trees in the town. The other thing we have been asked to take on is to identify important views and vistas in the town, the protection of which will have to be taken into account in any planning application for developments – a task for keen photographers.

There are other things going on in the town in which the Society should, and expects to have an input, in particular the funding for improving our main streets – we were not involved in the recent bid for government funding for high streets, and which Falmouth failed to get. Then there is the County's place shaping initiatives which we believe should deliver the projects within the neighbourhood plan. We are also keeping our eye on various government initiatives; for example, getting desperate to do something about housing they have set up the 'Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission', built on the fallacy that whatever they (or Prince Charles) thinks is beautiful will make people accept otherwise unacceptable development! Much better to understand and promote good and sustainable design – as the Society has done since its foundation

So although progress seems slow, we are making a very positive contribution to Falmouth. It is so easy to oppose change and every development – that is not our way. We are careful in what we oppose, and for the most part look for the creative and high quality ways forward for Falmouth's future.

During last year our talks included: Charles Fox on the Fox family homes and businesses; Francis Howie on geology; Kirstie Edwards on Plastic Free Falmouth; Adam Feldman on Renewable Energy, and a talk by Rosie Walker from the Woodland Trust. There were tours of Artists Graves conducted by Glyn Winchester, and of benchmarks with Frank Iddiells. Henrietta Boex showed us the paintings in the Art Gallery's store. We also had a very interesting visit to Shelterbox in Truro. Our pre-Christmas lunch took place at the Falmouth Hotel and included a very enjoyable Quiz compiled by Margaret Jenks.

We will always welcome ideas for talks, speakers and possible visits for next year. And, of course, we have tonight's talk by Grenville Chappel to look forward to.

There are many thanks to give, and our huge appreciation to: our Secretary Angela Shields, our Treasurer Jay Gidman, our Membership Secretaries Helen and Mike Johnson, our Social Secretary Jane Boriosi (who returned from Cuba this morning), Tanji Cork who looks after our publicity, and Margaret Jenks, our quizmaster. Also recently re-joining us we welcome back Heather Rowley and Joan Campbell. Again we thank Richard Shapland who has acted as the independent auditor for our accounts.

That is all our committee members, we should thank them again. And to repeat from last year and years before, a lot is done by a few people, so we would like to hear from anyone interested in joining the committee, or helping with one of our projects.

As usual, at this point in the meeting is when I stand down. Nominations and seconders for the post of Chairman for the coming year are now requested.

6. Nomination and election of Chairman. Mike Jenks was proposed by Tanji Cork and seconded by Heather Rowley.
7. Nomination and election of officers, Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer and Hon Membership Secretary and the remaining members of the committee (Angela Shields, Secretary, Jay Gidman, Treasurer, Jane Boriosi, Social Secretary, Margaret Jenks, Tanji Cork, publicity, Mike and Helen Johnson, membership, Heather Rowley, Joan Campbell- these were voted in unanimously.
8. There being no further questions except one about the barometer. Jane Boriosi outlined the Social programme.
9. Close of Annual General Meeting- 6.45pm

This was followed by a very interesting talk by Grenville Chappell on "Who is the Mayor?" He highlighted his very varied career and we were particularly impressed by all the wonderful work he has done on the Beacon.