

ANGLIAN POTTERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday May 14th at 10.30 2017, Mundford Village Hall

1. Apologies for Absence

Pat Armstrong, Helen Humphries, Christine Pike, Susan Cupitt, Linda Luckin, Tony Orvis, Ian Vance, Katherine Winfrey, Liz Smith, Anne Foxley, Lorry Cudmore, Jeremy Peake, Ann Allen, Mary Wyatt, Felicity Hoyle. Annie Sunderland

2. Members present

Bryan Hooson (1772), Rebecca Upson (1628), Dawn Barnard (1318), Libbi Hutchence (1335), Vivienne Burns (1418), Lucy Redman (1744), Annie Evans (1173), Harvey Bradley (213), Ian Evans (1172), Sue Judd (1651), Alan Foxley (51), Jeremy Nicholas (1128), Carol Page (1075), Juliet Gorman (883), Liz Lewis (197), Roberta Bateman (569), Pat Todd (1230), Andy Brooke (1790), Janet Tibitt (52), Paddy Dean (1338), Cathy D'arcy (809), Jane Gentle (760), Alex Watson (1510), Phyl Lewry (927), Maureen Baker (350), Tony Pugh (737), Nigel Jordan (1486), Peter Warren (1184), Liz Chipchase (919), Erika Dennison (807), Andrea Morton (1597), Rosemarie Cooke (200), Helen Martino (155), Diana Kazemi (515), Hilary Wilmott (1498), Harriet James (1282), Margaret Gardiner (804), Fiona Shreeve (1555), Adrian Kempster (1694), Sheila Chambers (1253), Kate Minnis (1429), Deborah Davis (1620), Andy Wright (1302), Rosalind Seal-Coon (1529), Ruth Gillett (1113), Julia Wigley (1795), Frank Logan (144), Christine Pike (1101), Janice Burgoyne (1241), Steve Oatley (1240), Patrick Goodson (1712), Richard Cranwell (1516), Nuala Garnsey (586), Colin Saunders (140), Gary Douglas (1658), Jerry Finlayson (619), Sarah Went (1250), Karen Player (1662), Louise McDonald (1657), Georgia D'Alberto (1706), Geoff Lee (980), Grace Evans (1754), Tina Stark (1299), Anton Todd (1244), Nicki Darrell (1121), Trudy Staines (1499), Carolyn Postgate (102), Paul Ostro (1225), Celia Greenaway (1462), Jennie Longbottom (1280), John Masterton (923), Ray Auker (975), Jo Arnold (1635), Sue Bowerman (1668), Joyce Davison (49), Marie Dawe (1695), Margaret Hope (1116), Sharon Laslett (1557), Christine Le Grand (1666), Denise Brown (1268), Josephine Atkinson (740), Deborah Davis (1620), Lucy Perry (1575), Mike Paul (1739), Louise Todd (1784), Usch Spettigue (122), Deborah Davis (1620).

Minutes of 2016 AGM

The minutes of the 2016 AGM were proposed by Trudy Staines and seconded by Liz Lewis. They were unanimously accepted by the membership

Matters Arising from 2016 AGM

Jennie asked if there was any movement on the Camp risk assessment which was agreed at the 2016 AGM. Liz Lewis and Ray Auker reported that this was in hand for 2017 Camp. They were thanked by the committee for their work in this matter.

Officers Reports

Chairman's report AGM

I was not at the AGM last year – perhaps 2017 that's why I ended up with this job – so I did not get a chance to thank Ray for all he has done for AP. Ray stepped in as Chairman after the sudden loss of Victor, so at a very difficult time, and gave us a focus for moving forward. Ray has always been very interested in the education of future potters, and the sharing of experience and knowledge, and that was very clear in all his

involvement. I hope that will be something we always support, throughout the organisation. Thank you to Ray.

At the AGM in 2016, we noted that we had 457 active members. As of this week we have 518, a net increase of 61 over the year. In fact I suspect that this represents far more new members, as each year sees a few leave us. I'd like to welcome everyone who has joined us during the year – if you joined early on and have stayed the course, even better! We are a thriving organisation, with plenty to get involved with.

I'd also like to thank everyone who gets involved in any of our activities, as that's how we continue to grow. Nothing happens without the involvement of our own members who devote lots of time, knowledge, and for some, space, to AP. Christine Pike is standing down from the committee this year, having been involved for a long time in all our PR and publicity efforts, so is a great example of this principle. Thank you Christine for the time and expertise you have devoted to AP (and as the AGM demonstrator last year!).

We haven't had a totally smooth time, as our main Christmas Exhibition at All Saints' church had to be cancelled at the last minute, as no-one thought to tell us that they had let the church to another congregation. Despite a lot of hard work by Ian and the exhibitions team, it wasn't possible to find an alternative in time. However, one good thing that came out of it was finding the Undercroft in Norwich, which led to our spring show – the first AP show in Norwich for many years. It looks a rather unprepossessing space at first, but when we had moved in with our displays, it looked very impressive, and had a great response from all the visitors, with good sales as well. I was particularly pleased to see a lot of newer members exhibiting for the first time, and also a lot of members from the eastern part of our region, who perhaps feels that Cambridge is a step too far. I'm not sure of the exact proportions, but I suspect that there was less than a 40% overlap of exhibitors between the venues. Thanks again to everyone involved – we will be back there next year, and I hope, at All Saints' for Christmas.

The other issue that has occupied quite a lot of committee time this year was kicked off at the last AGM. The issue we have been looking to resolve is the one of the potential liability of members to any claims against AP. AP is currently an unincorporated association, which is not an unusual arrangement for a group like ours. However, unincorporated organisations do not have an independent legal identity or personality, so there could be a situation where the members of the management committee, and also all the membership, might be liable for claims.

We came up with a proposal to change our status to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, which would solve the issue, by giving us limited liability, and have a by-product of providing some financial benefits through Gift Aid. After an EGM in November, we made an application to the Charity Commissioners for registration as a CIO. Eventually, we received a series of comments and questions that, if we followed their approach, would make major changes to the benefits we provide to our members. All the activities of a charity need to be for public benefit, and while there is no doubt that a lot of our activities can be clearly seen to provide a public benefit, the more 'internal' activities such as the clay store, and selling and promoting our members' work, are more for individual benefit, and we couldn't find any form of words that would satisfy the public interest requirement. We didn't feel that we could compromise on these major benefits, so we have withdrawn the application, and are looking at alternatives. We need a bit more discussion about the practicalities, but the simplest approach would appear to be registering AP as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG). In this case, the liability of members would be limited to £1 (in the event of any claims), and we can continue to do

business in the way we do now. There are some extra accounting things to be done, but very similar to the charity requirements, and without the heavy hand of the charity commission.

So I hope we will keep growing, and providing good experiences for our members. With such a wide geographical spread, and large membership, there's always the possibility of putting on an event, a small exhibition, a workshop, so if you have an idea for something and you feel that the rest of AP can help you, please ask. The answer is usually yes, what can we do to help?

John was thanked by the membership for the extensive, arduous work undertaken in researching the best way forward for the group to move both through CIOG and company limited by guarantee. It was proposed by Carolyn Postgate that the committee should continue the route of CLG, this was seconded by Roberta Bateman and a unanimous vote was taken from the floor.

Vice Chairman Report

Jerry pointed out to the members that risk assessment and limited liability were necessary for AP especially at Camp, as no other potters group undertook the activities of Camp and it needed to be in place. Jerry reported that a large tree had fallen and flattened the glazing shed this year. John thanked Jerry for his invaluable support and all those involved in building the salt kiln.

Jerry noticed that previously in AP all events appeared to run at a loss, whilst exhibitions ran at a profit, this has somewhat changed recently, events now being balanced to break even. Jerry suggested that AP credit card machine facility be made available for organisers use in selling goods, AP to take a percentage. This was discussed at length but was not agreed.

Treasurer Report

See appendix 1

Celia thanked Liz Chipchase for her continued advice and support over the year. The finances reflect the increased income from demonstrations and membership with exhibitions and clay stores generally breaking even. Carolyn Postgate suggested that we should have a documented list of AP assets which will be necessary for registration for CLG

Website

The website (www.anglianpotters.org.uk) continues to operate in a stable manner, with very few issues. 99% of the user issues I deal with are forgotten passwords or login arrangements, usually solved by a simple password reset or reminder. We have had over 33,000 page views since Jan 1st.

We have 518 active members (as of 8/5/17), and 498 user accounts on the site. I suspect that some of these are for lapsed members, so the proportions aren't quite as high, but it's going well. There are 139 'showcase' pages, so not such a high level. If you are planning to exhibit at any of our shows during the year, it would be a great benefit if you could set up a page. It's very straightforward, but if you have any problems, please contact me. This is becoming more important, as Penny has retired from looking after the profile books used at the shows, and we are planning to use hard copy versions of the showcase pages to update the books. This will give a more consistent look and feel, and make it easier for the profiles to be regularly updated.

The mass emailing system has been changed to use a system more closely linked to the website. While there continue to be episodes when some members don't receive mails, it does seem to be performing better than the Mailchimp system. Messages are sent out fairly regularly, particularly before every event, so if you think that you aren't getting anything from us, please let me know. Messages are usually sent from info@anglianpotters.org.uk, so please add this address to your contacts list to avoid mails being junked.

Jeremy Peake continues to look after our 'official' Facebook page and Twitter account, and they have seen massive increases in use, especially around the recent exhibition in Norwich. The Facebook group, run by Robi, is growing, and used by lots of members to exchange information. I usually post any news and 'for sale' items on this page, to get the info out as fast as possible. Please 'like' our pages, 'follow' on Twitter (it multiplies the connections each time someone follows) or join the Facebook group.

John announced that Penny Johnson is retiring from the position of looking after AP exhibition profile book. Penny was thanked for the work she has undertaken over the years.

Andrea Morton volunteered to look after the exhibition profile book. Andrea was thanked for her offer.

Ruth Gillett reminded the membership to keep updating their personal profiles on Google show case to ensure current work is displayed.

Exhibitions report

In the period since the last AGM we have held successful open exhibitions at Emmanuel College Cambridge in August 2016 and more recently at Norwich in April 2017

Unfortunately we were not able to run the usual Christmas show at All Saints' church in Cambridge in November / December last year as the church had been double booked by the Churches Conservation Trust. We hope to be back in 2017 but there are still hurdles to jump in order to make that work, as the CCT have re-organised the display features of the venue and installed desks and displays that will need to be moved if we are to use it as normal. The CCT have agreed to credit us with the costs of advertising that we had already incurred last year

As a result of the All Saints cancellation we looked for alternative venues but could not find one that was suitable in the short time available, however this search did result in discovering The Undercroft Gallery in Norwich that we have now used for this year's Easter Exhibition

The Undercroft is a very large space owned by the City Council and by using all our resources we have been able to transform it into a very good display venue. We have been made welcome in Norwich and results have been excellent. It has enabled us to expand the range of potters showing, with those further north taking part. We hope to make this a regular feature and have it booked for the whole of March next year

We also have a number of new members exhibiting at these shows which is encouraging

During the year we have engaged a new transport provider to move the stands and lights etc from Barnham to the shows and we have bought further panels and lights to both replace old ones and to give us more flexibility in setting up

During the year members also ran smaller exhibitions at various locations including Hyde Hall, Walberswick, and Ickworth this year.

I would like to thank all the team who help with the exhibitions doing posters, publicity and helping with the set-up and tear –down, but particularly Richard Cranwell who has taken on a large part of the management of the process this year. We would like to add another member to the organising team if there are any volunteers?

Liz Chipchase and Jennie Longbottom volunteered to assist Ian and Richard with publicity dispersal.

Press and Publicity

This will be my final report before stepping down as Publicity Officer in May. There is now a good, competent team of people able to spread the word about Anglian Potters, chiefly through social media. We are building relationships with local/regional magazines, newspapers, and radio stations - this will be crucial to on-going publicity for our organisation as the media is always more likely to take stories from people they already know.

We now have a Dropbox folder which can be shared with anyone in the team who requires high res images and press releases for publicity purposes. This has made life so much easier than having to pass around individual files between members.

I have put an ad for the summer show in Venue magazine - publication date, June 2017. It is accompanied by some editorial in which I have referenced some of our other up-coming shows, and put in links to our website and all social media accounts.

I have provisionally booked ad space for the Autumn/Winter edition of Venue and informed Heather Waters (Advertising) that I will be handing this over to my successor.

The online listing in Craft & Design magazine will need updating when we have an official poster for the summer show.

At present, the team roles are as follows:

Christine Pike - Publicity Officer; press releases/ editorial/ magazine ads/ print-ready artwork (where necessary)

Jeremy Peake - Twitter/ Social Media

Carol Allison - Social Media/ regional media/ Radio + TV

The entire above are responsible to Ian Vance and the Exhibitions Team.

Roles to be clarified for the future:

New Publicity Officer - Someone who can write succinctly for a variety of audiences (including social media/ print/ radio) and - ideally - is familiar with Photoshop, In Design, or similar so that they can download and manipulate images for sending print-ready artwork. Someone with a persuasive manner who can negotiate good advertising rates with magazines would be good too!

Permanent designer for print-ready materials - ideally, this needs to include ads, etc as well as posters and flyers - if these roles remain split (as they are now), both people

need to work closely with each other to make sure deadlines can be met. Christine assured AP that she would continue to support the incoming publicity officer.

Christine was thanked for all for the work and dedication she has undertaken in this role.

Carolyn Postgate observed that the cost of Photoshop is quite extensive and it was agreed a second licence, funded by AP, should be made available to the incoming publicity officer.

Membership Secretary

We have 457 active members and have had 60 new members this year with a flurry around Christmas, probably spurred on by The Great British Throwdown on television. The website is working well for new members to sign up and for existing members to renew their membership. Several members still do not realise that membership cards can be printed out via the 'my details' section of the website. Currently there have been 67 new members for 2017. Vivienne asked that she is contacted should there be any change in personal details in order that members are updated and remain on mailing lists. Vivienne was thanked for her work

Newsletter Editor

By deadline day for each newsletter there is always plenty of material for a twenty four page edition: thanks to members providing their articles and views. I had intended to change the format to include a slightly larger font size in keeping with the presentations of our colleagues in other potters' associations but this only meant extending the newsletter by another four pages and therefore incurring greater production costs. The alternative would be to edit out several contributions and that I have refused to do: I have had to use the editor's pencil severely on a couple of occasions but, contributions have all been included and, pro tem, at least, the font size remains the same.

At Mundford demonstration days, I used to fear that I would receive that well known tap on the shoulder from the lady with the clipboard: Carolyn, asking in that pleasantly firm tone if I would care to write up the notes about the demo for the newsletter. I am now that person who is about to spoil somebody's enjoyment of the demonstration but, thankfully, members have agreed to write the notes and produce accounts in good time and I do accept, sort of, that some members feel uncomfortable producing such reports.

The Anglian Potters Newsletter currently has a circulation of over 500 and has become a useful publication for advertising: a major clay supplier has joined us for the summer edition and I hope that others might follow.

I am grateful to Carolyn Postgate who still contributes as 'critical friend' by helping with a 'read through' on the eve of the newsletter's trip to the printer and the helping hand when Adobe InDesign throws up a problem which defeats me.

Events

Trudy hoped everyone has enjoyed this year's line up as much as she had. Bookings have been good and covered the costs. I would like to remind members not to chat during the demonstrations as this shows disrespect to the guest speaker. I have had people complaining to me.

The raffle has been a great success and we have had lots of lovely prizes and happy winners, including me.

Forthcoming demonstrations:

Oct 1st Jim Robison

Nov 12th Niek Hoogland

Jan 4th Nick Marsh

April 8TH Carina Ciscato

If anyone has any suggestions for future demonstrations please email their name as I invariably forget if people just mention them to me.

I would like to thank John Masterton for his support, it has been a very tough year and he has been there every step of the way.

I would also like to thank all the supporters who help on the day and before arranging the equipment needed and getting to the venue. Anton Todd, Celia Greenaway, Jerry Finlayson, Liz Chipchase, Nicky Darrell, Paul Ostro, Ray Auker, Felicity Hoyle, Andrea Morton, Elizabeth Clarke and all the helpers who set up and pack away and clean at the end of the day. If I have missed anyone I do apologise.

Selected Members Secretary

- 4 new selected members (Matthew Blakeley, Sarah Went, Roger Duke and Phil Arthur)
- 40 selected members in total
- Seapictures Gallery in Clare, Suffolk in June-August 2017

Big "Thank you" to Harvey Bradley who has taken on the organisation of the Ferini Art Gallery exhibition in Lowestoft.

- The Seapictures Gallery has selected 8 members work for the summer show running from June until beginning of August
- Ferini Art Gallery, Lowestoft in October 2016
- Dolby Gallery, Oundle, February 2017
- Bloomsbury Design, London planned for July 2017 The exhibition at Bloomsbury Design will feature only 3 selected members due to space restrictions. The theme will be "The Magic Table."

Election of new officers

There was no interest expressed in the role of publicity officer.

Re-election of Committee

The committee elected to stand for another year. This was proposed by Juliet Gorman and seconded by Roberta Bateman and carried unanimously.

Subscription rates for 2018-2019

It was agreed that the subscription rates for 2018-2019 will remain unchanged.

AOB

A discussion took place as to whether AP should be donating money towards the New Potters College at Stoke on Trent. A sum of £75 has already been donated.

Usch Spettigue proposed that an increased donation should be sent by AP this year.

A sum of £1 per member was proposed by Celia Greenaway: 42 members voted to accept this

A sum of £1,000 was proposed by Margaret Gardiner: 29 members voted to accept this.

The motion to donate £1 per member at a cost of £524 was carried and agreed.

Liz Chipchase suggested that the Potters College could be our named charity for the All Saints Christmas Tree decorations this year.

Carol Page suggested an annual donation which will be discussed at AP committee

Members were also advised that individual donations can be made via Face book.

The meeting closed at 11.50 a.m.