



Friends of Coventry Cathedral
Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting
Held on Monday, May 19th 2008
12.15pm, Lecture Hall, Coventry Cathedral

Present: 44 members attended the meeting

Apologies: 16 apologies were received.

Dean's introduction: The Dean opened the meeting with prayer and a welcome. He said he was thrilled and excited that, after false starts, the Friends is moving forward into new directions, with new ideas and possibilities. He handed the meeting over to Ken Offley, Vice Chairman.

Vice Chairman's Report: Ken Offley thanked members for their patience and on-going support during a period of hiatus. Everyone was aware that this had been a period of uncertainty. He particularly thanked Richard Chamberlaine Brothers, Ted Hiscocks, Rosemary Boyes-Watson and Judith Hall for their willingness to keep things going and for getting us to this point.

Council elections: Two existing Council Members are standing down- Muriel Grimmet-Offley and Simon Monaghan. They were thanked for their period of service. Mary Rennison and Michael Mogan, will continue until their period of office finishes at the AGM in September.

The following nominations for Council were unanimously agreed:

- Peter Woodward as Chairman
- Ken Offley, Vice Chairman
- Helen McGowan, Membership Secretary and Council Secretary
- Denise Hiscox, Treasurer,
- Jenny Blair
- Margaret Lloyd
- Ted Hiscocks
- Martin Williams
- Brenda Stokes
- Jane Woodward
- David Williams

Finance: Denise Hiscox outlined that she had now taken possession of the financial files and records. The accounts for 2006 had already been compiled but were not yet approved or examined. The 2007 accounts were still to be completed. It was her priority that these tasks should be completed in order to be compliant with Charity Commission requirements.

Denise tabled a financial statement. This showed that there was a total fund balance in May 2008 of £34,273.65. Of this total, £10,000 was held in a designated fund to support the costs of servicing life members. £1,024.50 was held in a restricted fund for use on leaflets about the Hallowing Places in the ruins.

Chairman's outline of future plans: Peter Woodward expressed his excitement at the prospect of serving as Chairman. Although feeling somewhat daunted by the burden of responsibility and expectation, he saw real opportunities ahead for the Friends and had a really good Council team to take things forward. He outlined a number of priority action areas.

- **Membership:** Consolidating our existing membership is a priority. The recent mail-out to members had elicited a good response and feedback. Current membership stands at 263 including 194 life members. Is a target of 2012 members by the year 2012 an impossible ambition? We'll see! A new Friends membership leaflet was being drafted.
- **Programme of activities:** The Friends is about fellowship and warmth about this place. A programme of events was being developed including a reception before the ICMF Gala concert, an open garden party in July. Further events were planned for the Autumn.
- **Communication:** Good communication with members is essential. A newsletter is scheduled for August and February. A new website is being planned, although communication by post would continue to for those without internet access.
- **Donations:** The Council needs to develop a policy for the distribution of funds. It is hoped we will soon be in a position to make funds available to support projects primarily to support the cathedral fabric. Thought would also be needed about creative ways to raise additional funds.
- **'Helping Hands':** The Friends are perfectly placed to develop goodwill and enthusiasm to help the Cathedral through volunteering. This is another area that will be developed. Peter said he was hoping that many members would feel able to provide some practical support on occasions so that all the work didn't fall on all the Council members.
- **Friends 75th Anniversary:** 2009 is the 75th anniversary of the Friends and Peter is hoping it will be a special year to showcase the Friends and prepare the way for the 50th anniversary of the new Cathedral in 2012.

Following a brief question and answer session, the meeting was closed at 12.50pm and members repaired up to the Nave to attend the Monday lunchtime organ recital given by Graham Barber.

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