

DRAFT MINUTES OF AGM via ZOOM, WEDNESDAY 6th MARCH 2024 at 7pm

Present: Derik Palmer, Helen Slade, Jan Brodie, Anne Cole, Doug Harbour, Neil Gillard, Diana Arseneau-Powell, Jenny Beattie, Anita Cotterall, Pat Gilbert, Jane Ingrouille, Janet Jenkins, Ziggy Knopfler, Bob Lander, Kevin McCullum, Patrick O'Sullivan, John Rawlinson, Nadine Stah White, Alan Williamson.

Apologies: Lyn Jones, Tony Archibold, Pat Breen, Darina O'Byrne, Sue Edwards, Heather Farrell-Roberts, Mike Fenton, Anja Lyttle, Maggie MacBean, Felix Mauron, Christina Murrie, Barbara Parkinson, Anne Pyne, Chris Sills, Alison Simmons, Alison Smith, Christine Turner, Ian White.

Our President, Derik, opened the meeting and welcomed all present to our AGM.

The minutes of the 2023 AGM, which had been circulated before the day, were taken as read, proposed as a true record by Anne Cole, seconded by Doug Harbour, and accepted by all present.

Matters Arising: Sue Edwards had raised some minor points, together with some other business, and it was decided to deal with both under the latter agenda item.

The President's Report, previously circulated and attached, was summarised.

Treasurer's Report: the accounts and report were previously circulated and are attached again. Helen Slade proposed that the accounts be adopted, this was seconded by Nadine White, and unanimously passed.

Membership Secretary's Report: By the end of 1st February, the Membership figure stood at 128, including Honorary Life Members, the winner of the AH Notes Contributor who drew free membership, and those who joined after 1st November 2023. A few of these had their membership pending, awaiting Cheque or BACS payments to be received by the Treasurer or into the Account. New recruits were Darina O'Byrne, Glyn Purland and Suzie Lim (pending). 21 members had not renewed - of whom 4 (Angie Maher, Andi Cale, Yvonne and Sarah Parkes) had unsubscribed themselves. It should be noted that most of those who did not renew (about 14), had only been members for one year or less. About 5 members avoided MemberMojo's automated system and joined offline, 2 of whom needed to be asked by me to give their assent to the Data Protection Policy by email. A very much smaller number than previously contacted me about experiencing difficulties with the automated renewal invitation, and I was happy to complete their renewal on their behalf. I never mind assisting people who struggle with technology, but about 5% take up 95% of my time. If members realized that membership cannot be approved without Data Protection Assent, it would eliminate needless delays. As at 5th March, 6 more new members have joined - Emmy Thompson, Maria Judge, Judy Edmonds, Dariusk Wyrzykowski, Joanna Garvin & Graham Barden. Of 2 applicants (1 joiner and one renewer) whose memberships were pending, one applied through MemberMojo, but failed to pay the fee despite reminders and has sadly had to be declined; and the other who paid by Standing order but had yet to give assent to the Data Protection Statement, has been renewed after several reminders. The membership total now stands at 133.

Officers and Committee Members: There were no new nominations for any of the posts. The following were confirmed in their roles: Derik - President, and, although preferring not to be dual-hatted (not because of the workload, but as a principle of two officers roles being performed by one person), to continue as Treasurer for a further year, Helen - Vice-President and Autoharp spares, Neil - Secretary, Doug - Membership Secretary, Jan - Events Organiser and Editor of Autoharp Notes, Lyn - Loaner Coordinator, Anne - Website Co-ordinator, Alison Simmons - Committee Member. All proposed by Pat Gilbert, seconded by John Rawlinson and accepted unanimously.

Subscriptions and Fees: Given the healthy state of the finances there is no need to increase either subscriptions or fees for events.

Future Events

The UKA Calendar (sent out with the AGM papers) will be updated and re-issued when necessary (the latest issue is attached). SFSS Easter Week will be from 8th – 12th April, The Dorset (live) UKA weekend will be on 14th- 16th June, the Moniaive Autoharp Get Together 9th-11th August and the Zoom UKA Day on 23rd November (this last will be free to all members). Karen Mueller's workshops will continue in alternate months, the warbles will continue on a monthly basis, and Helen plans to offer further theory sessions on Zoom if there is a demand.

Nadine is still looking at running a single autoharp Day in South West Scotland – possibly in September, and also possibly at a venue in Newton Stewart.

Helen is prepared to run the online Advent Calendar again this year using the same procedures as in 2023. This was widely welcomed.

Other Business

1. Anne said that if anyone was still having problems with accessing the members' area of the website they should ask her, and she will sort it out.
2. Sue Edwards raised the following points before the meeting:
 - a. Can we try to have much more notice for UKA days, so people can plan their calendars? This is why the Committee has instigated the UKA Calendar (see above under Events).
 - b. UKA used to give out information to potential hosts, to encourage events in different areas – we do remind members of the possibility, and information is available on the website and sent to any member who expresses an interest in hosting an event.
 - c. Please put information about all events on BOTH FB group pages. This does now happen – both FB pages for events open to non-members – not the Warble or KM's wkshops which are for members only.
 - d. There are players who don't use FB, so perhaps we should have extra information available on the public part of the website, or a contact to find out. The website is under continuous development, but we think we're gradually getting there.
 - e. Committee members send out emails, but these are only for members, so a link or contact on part of the website, may help some non-members to find out about events or where to get advice. We do have contacts listed on the website to field general and specific questions.
3. Pat and Nadine asked that their particular thanks be passed on to Jan for all that she does.
4. Nadine feels that COVID precautions have slipped at events as memories for most recede. It was pointed out that these precautions are mainly an individual responsibility now, but UKA would continue to keep the situation under review.
5. John Rawlinson asked that members' thanks be recorded given to all Committee members and tutors.

The meeting was closed at 8.15pm. The Grand Draw then took place.

Grand Draw Results:

- 1st – Gig Bag – Fiona Shaw
- 2nd – Set of Strings – Judith Haddock
- 3rd – Cooperstand – Christina Murrie
- 4th – Roll of Felt – Peter Everson
- 5th – Neoprene – Rebecca Joice
- 6th – Autoharp Cosy/Amazon Voucher – Marcia Dungan