

The Friends of Romsey Abbey

Charity Number 1134191

2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday June 6th 2019 at 7.30 pm in the Church Rooms

AGENDA

1. Opening Prayer
2. Welcome by the President
3. Apologies
4. Minutes of the last meeting
5. Chairman's Report
6. Honorary Treasurer's Report
7. Honorary Project Chairman's Report
8. Honorary Events Chairman's Report
9. Honorary Membership Secretary's Report
10. Election of Officers and Committee Members
11. Any Other Business

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE
FRIENDS OF ROMSEY ABBEY
7th JUNE 2018 IN THE ABBEY

Present: were 26 members.

The meeting began with The Friends prayer.

Welcome: Trustee Chairman, Roger Rowe welcomed all the members present and thanked them for their attendance.

Apologies: Tim Rogerson, Jane Arden, Margaret Lillywhite, Geoff and Sandy Gibbs, Kay Peake, Edna and Mike Rowland, Anne Hewett.

Minutes of the AGM on 8th June 2017 were agreed as a true record. Proposed by John Twigg and seconded by Ken Gibson.

Chairman's Report At the last AGM our then Chairman John Twigg resigned after several years of sterling service. Tim Sledge was our President and had not yet resigned as Vicar, I reluctantly agreed to be your Chair, and we seemed unlikely to have an Events Organiser or any outings.

We have adapted to all these challenges by simplifying the way we run events, improving the way we work with the PCC, and by working harder. Tim's departure was a spur to make us rethink our working with the Wardens and we agreed what we needed to change as we entered the interregnum. Dick Hewett and I met with the Wardens to help ensure the flow of Project Ideas and the funds for them was well managed by both parties. Dick, Ken Gibson, and I worked with the Wardens to get the Abbey's Social committee off to a good start. Dick now handles their bookings and Ken is the Chair of the Social Committee. I used my experience as Membership Secretary in setting up and running our database to set up the system the PCC needed for the Abbey to comply with the new GDPR regime.

This has increased the load on an already minimal sized Trustees Committee – now down to just 5 of us with no Clergy representative. You don't need to be a Trustee or attend endless meetings to come and help us out. We will need more help to keep the Friends running.

Within a few months, Dick - working with Colin and Rosemary, came up with an easier way to manage events and we had an Events Programme again as more event volunteers came forward. The Coffee morning team with Lis Speck as the creator and chief organiser, and her great team of Margaret Lillywhite, Marion Gibson, Sandra Vines, John and Hazel Clarke gave us a very successful string of Coffee Mornings with our world famous homemade biscuits. And our Dinner was great fun, organised by John Twigg and Ken Gibson and music from Tim Rogerson and Dick Hewett.

The money we raise is to fund Projects for the Abbey. John Thompson-Hall's Projects Committee manage these for us and a Church Warden now attends the meetings. We need the flow of Projects for the Abbey to be just right – not too many, not too few and within our surpluses. This has been harder than we expected, and John is attacking it with a will. Our Treasurer has streamlined the way we handle event and projects expenditure and income, and we have reduced the duplication of work between the Membership Secretary and the Treasurer.

The range of activities we are engaged in requires a good Secretary, and I am very grateful to Jill Hall for all her efforts across the 3 groups in this regard. I am very grateful too, to all the people I mentioned above. They have kept the Friends running.

For the next year we are rebalancing the work between the Trustees, with Dick taking on the Vice Chairman (“dogsbody”) role and me handing more of our communications over to Jill. And one great piece of news for us. We recently learned that we are to receive a substantial bequest directly to The Friends. This greatly increases our ability to fund Abbey projects and the influence we can have on the Abbey. We’ll let you know as soon as we have the detailed figure. But with a new Incumbent and substantially greater funds we have the ideal circumstance for a new Chair to take over and lead the Friends in 2019. Please bring any suggestions to any of our Trustees.

Treasurer’s Report. Copies of the report had been distributed. The receipts were up but the expenditure was down. The Events run on a Calendar year so that we receive payments in March for the events that are to come. This money will be spent but it means that our liabilities are up this year. The Trustees assess the balance at the end of December each year and allocate money for the projects for the following year.

In 2017 we had £12000

2018 we had £8000

We have £13000 ready to spend. Money is raised through membership and events.

Projects Report Since the last AGM the Friends have made financial contributions towards the Ethelflaeda Festival during October; partial costs throughout the year for our Children and Families Worker and in conjunction with TVBC, part cost towards the Romsey Future Tourism leaflets. A contribution was also made towards a Chorister Tutor for twelve months, and further costs for recreational equipment awarded to our Youth Workers team.

We have funded a state of the art device in various local Care Homes to enable people regular access to the live streaming of Abbey services. We have also met the cost of replacement microphones for the existing P.A. system and funded the printing of 30,000 additional English Visitor Leaflets and 2000 Italian leaflets and 50,000 copies of the Abbey brochure. In addition more recently we have provided Lanyards for the Abbey Guides, and audio-visual equipment to enhance communication between our Organist and Choir during services and rehearsals.

Within our limited funds which we have obtained from our member’s generous subscriptions, donations and regular fundraising at our events, we will continue to finance similar projects during 2018/19 and would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members for the continuing support.

Events Report. Our Events Diary for 2017 included a wide variety of visits, which were generally well supported by the Friends.

In June two minibuses transported a party to the Swanage Railway and Corfe Castle, led by Dick Hewett. Dick also led a trip by minibus to two old churches in the Test Valley at Ashley and Little Somborne, where Liz Hallett was an expert guide; and yet another trip, this time to the Tangmere Military Aviation Museum near Chichester in September. Tim Rogerson was the second minibus driver. Finally, a new venture saw Colin and Rosemary Davis lead a large party by coach to the Mill Theatre at Sonning for lunch and a matinee performance of “My Fair Lady”.

Members will note that all five trips in 2017 were all ultimately led by either Dick Hewett or Colin and Rosemary Davis, and whilst these trips were all enjoyed by our enthusiastic members who continue to support our ventures which all made suitable surpluses to add to the FRA funds, they do rely on a very small number of people to make them happen. Fortunately in 2018 several others have stepped forward to share the load, and we hope that will continue.

In October a very good gathering of Friends enjoyed the Annual Dinner at the White Horse Hotel, coordinated by John Twigg and Ken Gibson. Brian Draper gave us a thoughtful talk after the meal, following which Dick Hewett and Tim Rogerson provided a musical finale featuring the songs of Flanders & Swan. It is rumoured they may return in October 2018.

In addition to all these programmed events, the Friends continue to organise regular bimonthly Coffee mornings in the Town Hall. These continue to be well supported, offering an opportunity for fellowship, as well as a chance to recruit new members and encourage members to sign up for the events.

The programme for 2018 was issued in the New Year, with the first trip again proving extremely popular, led by Colin and Rosemary Davis. This was a direct replacement for an aborted trip on the Kennett & Avon Canal in April 2017, when the party travelled only a few hundred yards before the boat became marooned. In 2018 the party were delighted to make it the whole way to Bath, enjoying a splendid meal en route.

Plans for the rest of 2018 include trips to Hampton Court, the Weald & Downland Museum at Singleton, The Vyne and Sandham Memorial Chapel, and a repeat trip to Sonning, this time for "Guys And Dolls".

I would like to thank all those who have directly or indirectly led or supported the many events which have been organised, both past and future. All our events are budgeted to make a surplus which feeds directly into the funds we can use for the projects we wish to support. The full events programme contributed over £3k from 2017, a very significant total, thanks to the healthy numbers attending. May this continue in 2018.

Membership Secretary's Report The rule for Standing Orders is changing to simplify our banking arrangements. Existing Members paying by Standing Order will be members for 2018/19 provided we receive their subscription by January 2019, and so on for subsequent years. I have now asked all members who pay by Standing Order to pay them to our TSB account. This entails cancelling their existing one to the HSBC account and starting a new one to our TSB account payable on December 31st. This has been difficult for some of you I know, and I thank the many of you have made the change already.

To be a Member in 2019/20 existing members who pay by cheque or internet transfer need to renew their subscriptions by 31 March 2019.

Our membership count for 2017/18 based on the old rules is 399! This actual number will reduce as some members will not renew by June 30th 2018.

Next year, due to the new rules, I will be able to count our member numbers on March 31st, 2019 and report our correct year end number at the AGM. So, please, if you have not yet taken out your

new Standing Orders to TSB paying us on December 31st 2018: please give this your attention now or contact me if you have a problem.

Election of Trustees:

Chairman Roger Rowe. Proposed by Ken Gibson and seconded by Liz Wagner.

Vice Chairman: Dick Hewett

Membership Secretary Roger Rowe.

Secretary Mrs Jill Hall.

Treasurer Dick Hewett.

Events Chairman Dick Hewett

Projects Committee Chairman John Thompson-Hall.

Committee member and Trustee: Tim Rogerson

All elected en bloc. Proposed by Ann Wattie and seconded by Sue Holden.

Website John Compton

AOB

We have 10 badges left for sale.

It was suggested that the Events Committee organise a trip to Eling Tide Mill. John Thompson-Hall agreed to organise it.

The Abbey Social Committee events are open to the Friends. They will be mostly of a religious nature and be for the Abbey congregation. Dick Hewett is the booking officer for both.

The Parish Tea takes place on the first Sunday of each month and is on the Friends Events programme.

Chairman's report to Friends of Romsey Abbey 2019 AGM

Looking back to last year's AGM, we had no President and we were trying to streamline the way our organisation works to reduce the load on the Trustees. I am delighted to say we have our President now - and it's nice to see you at your first AGM with the Friends. Our simplified processes have worked well and we can look back with a sense of satisfaction for the year we have had. Having a Warden and the Vicar at our projects meetings has been a big help.

I featured the dwindling number of Trustees last year. I am sorry to say we are now losing Tim Rogerson, the longest serving Trustee, and I would like to thank him for his contributions to the first 10 years of The Friends - everything from our accounts, our constitution, our relations with the Charity Commission, to driving minibuses for us. So now we are down to the Vicar and 4 Trustees - a worryingly small number to supervise our activities and to represent the range of views in our community. Dick and I each hold two posts! We think there were supposed to be 8 when the Charity was set up.

I closed last year by saying that with a new incumbent and our £60k legacy the stage was set for a new Chairman to lead the Friends in 2019. This year I am registering that I will stand as your Chairman for 2019/20 but I am not prepared to stand in 2020 when I shall be 80. I will, however, carry on as Membership Secretary doing admin stuff, if elected.

We are a voluntary organisation and can only do what our members are prepared to do for us. We are blessed having four hard working groups who shoulder the work - Lis Speck's coffee morning and biscuits volunteers, Dick's Events organisers, John Thompson-Hall's Projects committee and my hard-working committee of Trustees and key workers. All groups feel they are under considerable strain, and note they are a year older than they were last year. Lis needs a bigger pool of helpers to sustain her work. Our events need to be organised by volunteers, and the number of organisers has limited the number of events we can arrange. The three committees are hard to distinguish as there is nearly identical membership. I am particularly grateful for Colin and Rosemary Davis, Geoff Gibbs and Ken Gibson for the work they take on for the Committees.

Last year I thanked by name all the Friends who take on duties to make the Friends a success. I thank the **same people** again this year but hope there are more names to thank next year.

Our membership has now risen to 410. Our membership grows, and the impact we can have on the Abbey grows, as a result of Friends asking their Friends to join us. Our Coffee mornings continue to be a great draw to our members, their friends, and people we corral from outside the Town Hall (but not when they close the Town Hall front door). Thank you Lis and all your team.

You will be hearing reports from the Events Group and the Project Group Chairmen on how they got on this year.

This is our Tenth Anniversary year and we will celebrate it by holding a celebratory Strawberry Tea and Choral Evensong on July 21st. The Tea is for members only, it will be free, and you will be offered a glass of Prosecco or fruit juice. Tickets will be issued to find out how many people are coming so we can tell the Abbey catering team.

Roger Rowe
Chairman

FRIENDS OF ROMSEY ABBEY

Report and Accounts

for the year ended

31st March 2019

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- 3 Receipts and payments account
- 4 Statement of assets and liabilities

THE FRIENDS OF ROMSEY ABBEY

Report of the trustees for the year ended 31st March 2019

Legal and Administrative Information

This report covers the year from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.

Charity Number 1134191
Contact Address The Parish Office, The Vicarage, Church Lane, Romsey, SO51 8EP
Website www.romseyabbeyfriends.org

Trustees

The following all served as Trustees for the whole of the period from 1st April 2018 to the date of this report except as noted below:

Officers

T A Wharton (President) – from September 2018
J Hall (Secretary)
R B Hewett (Treasurer and Chairman of Events Committee)
R Rowe (Membership Secretary and Chairman)

Other Trustees

J Thompson-Hall (Chairman of Projects Committee)
T M Rogerson

Activities in the year

Membership has risen from 399 to 410 during the year from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

During the year six Coffee mornings in Romsey Town Hall took place together with an Annual Dinner. A number of outings were arranged for members including visits to Hampton Court, The Vyne and Sandham Memorial Chapel, The Mill Theatre at Sonning, and the Weald and Downland Living Museum. There was also a Trip on a Canal Boat.

The Charity supported several projects during the year including support for Romsey Abbey's Children and Families Worker, the Lecturer for the 10th Ethelflaeda Festival, a Chorister Tutor and additional audio visual equipment for organist at Romsey Abbey.

During the year the Charity received a significant legacy from a former member. Whilst it is the Trustees' intention that the funds received should be spent in due course, they have, until a suitable project is identified, placed the funds on deposit.

Financial Review

The receipts and payments account on page 3 shows income for the year of £88,843 (2018: £18,486) and expenditure of £14,331 (2018: £13,941), giving an excess of receipts over payments for the year of £74,503 (2018: £4,545). These amounts include a legacy amounting to £66,746 without which the excess of receipts over payments would have been £7,757. The cash funds at the end of the year were £94,716 (2018: £20,213). Adjusting these for known assets and liabilities at the year-end gives year-end reserves of £87,556 (2018: £16,063). The Trustees continue consider the level of free reserves that the Charity should hold and have concluded that it is not inappropriate for these to be up to £50,000. Excluding the legacy receipt noted above, free reserves were £20,810, which is well within this range.

THE FRIENDS OF ROMSEY ABBEY

Report of the trustees for the year ended 31st March 2019 (continued)

Risk Management

The Trustees continue to review the risks to which the Charity may be exposed and take such action as they deem necessary to manage those risks. The most significant risks faced by the Charity are a failure to recruit members and an inability to secure the services of enough Trustees to ensure that the Charity operates.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have reviewed the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on this matter and consider that the Charity's activities provide a benefit to the Public.

Plans for the future

Plans have been made for a programme of outings and social events as well as regular coffee mornings. The Trustees also plan to continue their recruitment programme to increase the number of members and hope to be able to recruit more Trustees.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Charity is governed by its constitution, which was adopted on 6th March 2009 before the launch of the charity on 3rd April 2009. It was subsequently amended before the charity obtained its registration with Charity Commission on 8th February 2010. The objects of the Charity (as stated in its constitution) are to advance the Christian religion in particular but not exclusively by assisting and supporting the Abbey Church of Saint Mary and Saint Ethelflaeda, Romsey, Hampshire (The Abbey), and support the Abbey's charitable purposes.

The Charity is managed by Trustees. In addition to meetings of the Trustees which take place four times each year there are two subcommittees which meet six times each year. One of these deals with Projects, whilst the other is responsible for planning the programme of Events. New Trustees are given information about the Charity and training for Trustees is provided as appropriate. Officers and other Trustees are elected annually by the Members of the Charity in Annual Meeting or by invitation from the Trustees at other times. Trustees retire at the Annual Meeting following their appointment but are eligible for re-election.

This report was approved by the Trustees on June 2019 and is signed on their behalf by:

J Hall
Secretary

FRIENDS OF ROMSEY ABBEY

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st March 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
Receipts		
Income from subscriptions	6,290	5,450
Donations and legacies	66,746	199
Fundraising activities	71	106
Income from activities	13,778	12,731
Deposit interest received	185	-
Gift aid	1,764	-
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Total receipts	88,834	18,486
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Payments		
Grants	5,890	4,995
Expenditure on activities	8,156	8,536
Printing, website and displays	170	295
Fundraising activities	115	115
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Total payments	14,331	13,941
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Net receipts for the year	74,503	4,545
Cash funds at 1 st April	20,213	15,668
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Cash funds at 31st March	£94,716	£20,213
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All amounts relate to unrestricted funds.

FRIENDS OF ROMSEY ABBEY

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31st March 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
Cash Funds		
Bank current and deposit accounts	£19,539	£20,213
CCLA COIF Deposit Fund balance	£75,177	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Assets		
Payments made for future events	£1,773	£2,255
Stock of goods for resale	£50	£50
Receipts due in respect of previous events	-	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Liabilities		
Amounts received in respect of future events	£8,983	£6,455
Accrued expenses	-	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on June 2019

R Rowe
Chairman

Friends of Romsey Abbey – Projects Committee Report for the AGM June 2019

The Friends make an annual financial contribution to the Abbey for various projects to enhance the visitor experience and to enable us all to develop the work and outreach of the Abbey overall. Our funds arise from members subscriptions including gift aid donations, small profits from our various events and generous individual donations: I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone here for their very welcome support since our last AGM.

In summary: we have again made a partial contribution to the annual costs for the work of our Children and Families Worker, Rhiannon Wilmott and a contribution to the annual Ethelraeda Festival held last October.

We continue to fund a 'state of the art' device in various local care homes to enable people regular access to the live streaming of Abbey services, including weddings to anywhere in the world. We have improved the audio visual communication between the Choir and organist during services and rehearsals. We continue to meet the costs of over 30,000 visitor leaflets in several languages which are an essential part of marketing the Abbey's history and artefacts. Also we have funded an innovative computer simulator for training young recruits with the help of our existing Bell-ringers. Plans are in place soon to have audio guide headsets to assist during our popular guided tours. More recently we have funded a pop-up banner for the Abbey's welcome table.

We have reserved funds to refurbish the effigy of the three-year old child, Alice Taylor who died in 1843, whose statue was wrought in plaster by her Father. Also funds are set aside for re-housing our Saxon plaited hair display item, believed to be from a coffin buried during the period AD 895 -1123. In the long term we have pledged our support for the Abbey Development Project including the St Lawrence Chapel Saxon foundations and protection of the exposed 11th century Saxon Rood carved in stone on the Abbey south elevation.

Returning to the modern day, smaller funds are allocated for sports equipment for our Youth Worker and for the Education Officer on a needs only basis.

John Thompson-Hall

27/05/2019

FRA Events Report 2018-19

The FRA Events Calendar runs by calendar year, with a schedule compiled in the autumn which is advertised around the New Year for events between January and December. As a result, this report leads on from my Report from last year's AGM, focusing on the continuing 2018 programme and the first event of 2019.

Our Events Diary for 2018 included a wide variety of visits, which were generally well supported by the Friends.

In early June Tim Rogerson drove a select group to Hampton Court for the day, a trip much enjoyed by all. This was followed in August by a visit to the Weald and Downland Museum at Singleton, led by Jill and John Thompson-Hall. September saw two minibuses driven by Dick Hewett and Tim Rogerson transporting a party to The Vyne and the Sandham Memorial Chapel, two National Trust properties in north Hampshire. Finally Colin and Rosemary Davis led a large party by coach to the Mill Theatre at Sonning for lunch and a matinee performance of "Guys And Dolls", our second trip to this venue which is likely to become the focus of an annual pre-Christmas jaunt.

In October a very good gathering of Friends enjoyed the Annual Dinner at the White Horse Hotel, coordinated by Jill Hall and Ken Gibson. This was a chance for the Friends to welcome our new vicar, Thomas Wharton, after which Dick Hewett and Tim Rogerson again provided a musical finale with minimal finesse.

In addition to all these programmed events, the Friends continue to organise regular bi-monthly Coffee mornings in the Town Hall. These continue to be well supported, offering an opportunity for fellowship, as well as a chance to recruit new members and encourage members to sign up for the events.

The programme for 2019 was issued in the New Year, with the first trip again proving extremely popular, led by Colin and Rosemary Davis. This was a coach trip to Henley in April, to visit the maritime museum there and enjoy a boat trip on the Thames, with lunch on board. Once again this was very much enjoyed by the full party who attended.

Plans for the rest of 2019 include trips to Uppark (NT), Tyneham and Lulworth, Eling Tide Mill, and a repeat trip to Sonning, this time for "Singing In The Rain". A few spaces are still available for a couple of the events, otherwise waiting lists are now the order of the day. And we have booked our annual Dinner for Tuesday 8th October.

I would like to thank all those who have directly or indirectly led or supported the many events which have been organised, both past and future. All our events are budgeted to make a surplus which feeds directly into the funds we can use for the projects we wish to support. The full events programme contributed over £2,500 from 2018, thanks to the healthy numbers attending. May this continue in 2019.

Dick Hewett
Chairman, Events Committee

Membership Secretary's Report

Last year we asked all members who pay by Standing Order to pay them to our TSB account. Many of you have made the change but I understand this is complicated to do and a nuisance: we have decided to leave things as they are for existing members but have all new subscriptions use the TSB. The Treasurer and I sincerely hope the TSB branch stays in Romsey.

Our membership count for 2018/19 is 410 compared to 399 last year. By coincidence 410 is also the number of people in the Abbey's Electoral Roll for 2019 as I go to press.

It has been pointed out to the Trustees that our membership subscriptions, which are a minimum of £10.00 for singles and £15.00 for couples discriminates against single members. To remedy this, we will raise the rate for NEW memberships to £20.00 making it twice the rate for singles. We will change our publications to reflect this as soon as possible.

Roger Rowe
Membership Secretary.