

FRIENDS OF MANX NATIONAL HERITAGE

Annual General Meeting

Held at 11am on Saturday 13th November 2021
at the Manx Museum, Kingswood Grove, Douglas

Present: Mr M Crowe (Chairman)
Mrs C Lovel (Executive Director, Manx National Heritage)
Mr H Shimmin (Treasurer)
Mrs V Fayle
Mrs M Bridson

Mrs N Pemberton and 25 other members

Mr Crowe welcomed members to the meeting.

- 1. Notice convening the meeting and Apologies for Absence.** The published notice convening the meeting was taken as read. Apologies for absence had been received from Ms H Leigh and Miss A Moore and 12 members.
- 2. The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 11am on Saturday 21st November 2020,** having been circulated to members present, were approved by the meeting for signature by Mr Crowe.
- 3. Chairman's Report.**

Mr Crowe began by welcoming Connie Lovel, the new Executive Director of MNH, to the meeting.

A Chairman's Letter from Mr Crowe had been circulated to all members with the members' mailing of October 2021.

Mr Crowe went on to remind the meeting that the charitable purpose of FMNH is the advancement and promotion of the aims and work of MNH, and the acquisition or contribution towards suitable artefacts or property for use or display. He said that the FMNH Board will be reviewing the Memorandum & Articles of Association to ensure that they comply with the latest legislation and will bring any proposed changes to the 2022 AGM.

Mr Crowe continued by saying that the year had been difficult for all charities but that he was delighted that although a number of Annual Members did not renew their memberships, many members either individually, family or through corporates, did renew and have continued to support FMNH's work. Hopefully they were able to travel and use the additional benefits as the year progressed. Without this support FMNH wouldn't be able to assist MNH with their requests for specific funding when sought and approved by the Board of FMNH.

Mr Crowe said that one of the latest commitments made to MNH is to assist financially with the textile conservation and the dynamic mounting of leathers for the new TT & Motorsports world-class gallery. This gallery is going to be an exciting addition to the Manx Museum.

FMNH have arranged a wide variety of interesting members' events over the summer. Just to select a couple of events, members were provided with a fascinating opportunity to enjoy a private viewing of the recently unearthed Viking Hoard, and another event was the recent hugely successful talk by Charles Guard on "Filming the Isle of Man" at the Erin Arts Centre.

Mr Crowe paid formal thanks to the team of FMNH gardening volunteers who have made a huge difference to the gardens at Cregneash, Rushen Abbey and the Grove. Philip Payne, MNH gardener (funded by FMNH), supported by Karen Griffiths and the volunteers have made many improvements to the gardens. FMNH had held three enjoyable private events to visit these gardens which allowed members to hear Philip and Karen explaining their current planting schemes and their ideas for the future.

FMNH members were also lucky enough to be able to visit Nicola's garden in May. Nicola was delighted she had so many volunteers ably assisting her with the many jobs involved in the run up to the opening and over the two days, resulting in taking £4000 for FMNH funds. Mr Crowe thanked all those involved.

Mr Crowe concluded by thanking all the Directors for their enthusiastic and dedicated service throughout the year. He also particularly thanked the Treasurer Harley Shimmin, and Nicola and Mary for all their efforts in keeping things going during the various lockdowns.

4. Treasurer's report.

Mr Shimmin reported:

INCOME

Subscriptions – As expected, Annual Member subscriptions for this last year had been adversely affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. The 10-year income had remained fairly static over the last 3 years at just over £10,000. In the two years ended 31st March 2020 the actual Net Annual subscriptions averaged about £75,000 but for the year ended 31st March 2021 this fell to £54,500. Mr Shimmin reported that as Members were not able to make use of their card the Directors have delayed increasing the Membership subscription for one year, with the new subscription to be agreed at the AGM in 2022.

Deposit Interest

A large reduction was seen here. Our Bank balances remained fairly similar to last year. However, the interest rates have plummeted, with about half of our deposits being transferred back onto our Current Account as the Bank would not accept deposits for less than eight months. The other deposits remain on a 3-month rollover basis, but with interest rates of 0.00% or 0.01%!

Donations

During the year there were two significant donations of £3000 and £10,000 respectively. We have not been able to identify the source of the £3000 and the Bank were not able to assist either. The £10,000 was from a local entity, who wishes to remain anonymous, but we are extremely grateful to both. A further sum has been received from the same source in our next Financial Year.

Events

From about halfway through the year Nicola managed to arrange new events or resurrect ones which had been cancelled because of Covid. This again generated a worthwhile income as well as helping with the social interaction appreciated by so many members.

EXPENDITURE

Heritage Awards

A further £6,250 was paid over for the Nautical Museum and £38,591 from the Professor Bucke legacy for the Horticulture Manager and work on the Gardens. Preparatory work on Thornbank has cost £14,667.

Post, printing, stationery and sundry expenditure

Lower general costs have been experienced this year with some larger items being purchased last year.

Subscription Collection Charges

Were well down on previous years as subscriptions are now only paid direct to us through Paypal, Eazipay and the Isle of Man Post Office.

ASSETS

Deferred Income

This relates to £37,765 which is due within this present Financial Year and £58,970 relating to 10 year and life subscriptions which is due over the next 10 years.

Bank Balances

Overall, figures were slightly down on last year, but at this time we have about £300,000 in the Current Account. This situation will continue to be reviewed in the light of interest rates and requests for funding from Manx National Heritage.

Committed funds

FMNH presently have commitments to Manx National Heritage in excess of £388,000.

In conclusion Mr Shimmin thanked the Directors for their support during this unusual year, especially Nicola and Mary, who used some of the lockdown time to update and improve records and systems. He was also extremely grateful to Phaedra Bird, Chris Dent and Ben Wynne from Crowe Isle of Man Audit LLC for their continued support guidance and advice in the preparation of our latest accounts.

A Resolution to adopt the accounts was proposed by Mr D Hubbert & seconded by Mr J Nolan. **The Meeting approved the Resolution.**

5. Election of Directors.

Ms H Leigh and Mrs V Fayle Directors retiring by rotational rule, had been proposed and seconded, and had expressed their willingness to continue to serve. **The Meeting approved.**

6. Appointment of Auditor.

Mr Shimmin proposed Crowe Isle of Man LLC for re-appointment, seconded by Mr M Goodman. **The Meeting approved.** It was noted and appreciated by those present that Crowe Audit LLC provide the assistance in the production of our accounts.

7. Report from Manx National Heritage.

Connie Lovel began by introducing herself and explaining her background.

Being relatively new in post, she said that she had been looking at the statistics. For example, there had been 2343 visits by FMNH members recorded in 2021 thus far. The travel industry was back with heritage tours; staycations were strong. Despite tight timescales, Castle Rushen had been ready for the new Governor's swearing in; there had been a LIDAR survey of Cregneash & the Calf.

She thanked FMNH volunteers for all their work at the Grove, Rushen Abbey and Cregneash.

She mentioned that 600 recordings from the Isle of Man had been digitised. She mentioned exhibitions at the Museum – particularly the stunning exhibition of Viking artefacts where two brooches will be back from conservation and on display by Christmas. She mentioned the TT Gallery.

Hop-tu-Naa had been successful with the help of FMNH volunteers.

She thanked her team at MNH, saying that the achievements are a team effort. Now is the time to develop and speak to more people around the Island. MNH is coming through challenging times and must regroup and re-energise to bring more people to sites and monuments. It was clear, she said, that MNH needed to shout out what is going on behind the scenes.

Key messages are Regroup, Focus on Positives, Get a stronger Message out, Develop a Communications Plan and underline the Authenticity of the Isle of Man to the wider world. We all need to celebrate success and "now is the time for us to develop our future ambition and vision for MNH".

Connie said that she will be working with the Friends in the New Year on a questionnaire and fundraising. Working together is important – we are all Ambassadors together.

She finished by thanking FMNH and the volunteers once again.

Mr Crowe thanked Mrs Lovel for a most interesting talk. He said that if anyone had any questions for her, she would be pleased to answer them after the meeting during coffee.

8. Any other business.

None.

Mr Crowe thanked the members for attending.

There being no further business the meeting closed at approximately 1150 am